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THE BEQUEST OF

ISAAC MYER

RECEIVED FEBRUARY 1904

THE

WORKS

OF

Samuel Johnſon, LL.D.

IN ELEVEN VOLUMES.

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CONTENTS

OF THE

EIGHTH VOLUME.

THE IDLER.

Numb.		Page
1	IDLER's character.	1
2	Invitation to correſpondents.	5
3	*Idler*'s reaſon for writing.	9
4	Charities and hoſpitals.	13
5	Propoſal for a female army.	17
6	Lady's performance on horſeback.	21
7	Scheme for news-writers.	25
8	Plan of military diſcipline.	29
9	Progreſs of idleneſs.	33
10	Political credulity.	37
11	Diſcourſes on the weather.	41
12	Marriages why advertiſed.	45
13	The imaginary houſewife.	49
14	Robbery of time.	53
15	*Treacle*'s complaint of his wife.	56
16	*Drugget*'s retirement.	60
17	Expedients of *Idlers*.	64
18	*Drugget* vindicated.	67
19	*Whirler*'s character.	71
20	*Louiſbourg*'s hiſtory.	75
21	*Linger*'s hiſtory of liſtleſſneſs.	80
22	Impriſonment of debtors.	84
23	Uncertainty of friendſhip.	88
24	Man does not always think.	92
25	New actors on the theatre.	96
26	*Betty Broom*'s hiſtory.	100
29	*Power of habits.*	105

CONTENTS.

Numb.		Page
28	Wedding day—Grocer's wife—Chairman.	109
29	*Betty Broom*'s hiſtory.	113
30	Corruption of news-writers.	117
31	Diſguiſes of idleneſs, *Sober*'s character.	121
32	Sleep.	125
33	Journal of a fellow of a college.	129
34	Punch and converſation.	134
35	Auction hunter.	138
36	The terrifick diction.	142
37	Iron and gold.	146
38	Debtors in priſon.	150
39	The bracelet.	155
40	Art of advertiſing.	159
41	On the death of a friend.	163
42	*Perdita*'s complaint of her father.	167
43	Monitions on the flight of time.	171
44	Uſe of memory.	175
45	Portraits defended.	178
46	*Molly Quick*'s complaint of her miſtreſs.	182
47	*Deborah Ginger*'s account of city wits.	186
48	The buſtles of idleneſs.	191
49	*Marvel*'s journey.	194
50	*Marvel* paralleled.	198
51	Domeſtick greatneſs unattainable.	202
52	Self-denial neceſſary.	206
53	Miſchiefs of good company.	210
54	Mrs. *Sevecharge*'s complaint.	215
55	Author's mortifications.	220
56	Virtuoſos whimſical.	224
57	Character of *Sophron* the prudent.	228
58	Expectations of pleaſure fruſtrated.	232
59	Books fall into neglect.	235
60	*Minim* the critick.	238
61	*Minim* the critick.	244
62	*Ranger*'s account of the vanity of riches.	248
63	Progreſs of arts and language.	252
64	*Ranger*'s complaint concluded.	255
65	Fate of poſthumous works.	259
66	Loſs of ancient writings.	263
67	Scholar's journal.	266

CONTENTS.

Numb.		Page
68	Hiſtory of tranſlations.	272
69	Hiſtory of tranſlations.	275
70	Hard words defended.	279
71	*Dick Shifter*'s rural excurſion.	283
72	Regulation of memory.	288
73	*Tranquil*'s uſe of riches.	292
74	Memory rarely deficient.	296
75	*Gelaleddin* of *Baſſora*.	300
76	Falſe criticiſms on painting.	304
77	Eaſy writing.	308
78	*Steady*, *Snug*, *Startle*, *Solid*, and *Miſty*.	312
79	Grand ſtyle of painting.	317
80	Ladies journey to *London*.	321
81	*Indian*'s ſpeech to his countrymen.	325
82	The true idea of beauty.	329
83	*Scruple*, *Wormwood*, *Sturdy*, and *Gentle*.	335
84	Biography how beſt performed.	339
85	Books multiplied by uſeleſs compilations.	343
86	Miſs *Heartleſs*'s want of a lodging.	346
87	Amazonian bravery revived.	350
88	What have ye done?	354
89	Phyſical evil moral good.	357
90	Rhetorical action conſidered.	361
91	Sufficiency of the *Engliſh* language.	364
92	Nature of cunning.	368
93	*Sam Softly*'s hiſtory.	372
94	Obſtructions of learning.	375
95	*Tim Wainſcot*'s ſon a fine gentleman.	378
96	*Hacbo* of *Lapland*.	382
97	Narratives of travellers conſidered.	386
98	*Sophia Heedfull*.	390
99	*Ortogrul* of *Baſra*.	393
100	The good ſort of woman.	396
101	*Omar*'s plan of life.	401
102	Authors inattentive to themſelves.	405
103	Horrour of the laſt.	408

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE IDLER *having omitted to diſtinguiſh the Eſſays of his Correſpondents by any particular ſignature, thinks it neceſſary to inform his Readers, that from the ninth, the fifteenth, thirty-third, forty-ſecond, fifty-fourth, ſixty-ſeventh, ſeventy-ſixth, ſeventy-ninth, eighty-ſecond, ninety-third, ninety-ſixth, and ninety-eighth Papers he claims no other praiſe than that of having given them to the Publick.*

THE

IDLER.

"Duplex libelli dos eſt, quod riſum movet,
"Et quod prudenti vitam conſilio monet."

PHAEDRUS.

Χάρις μικροῖσι.

THE IDLER.

NUMB. I. SATURDAY, *April* 15, 1758.

Vacui ſub umbra
Luſimus. HOR.

THOSE who attempt periodical eſſays ſeem to be often ſtopped in the beginning, by the difficulty of finding a proper title. Two writers, ſince the time of the *Spectator*, have aſſumed his name, without any pretenſions to lawful inheritance; an effort was once made to revive the *Tatler*; and the ſtrange appellations, by which other papers have been called, ſhow that the authors were diſtreſſed, like the natives of *America*, who come to the *Europeans* to beg a name.

It will be eaſily believed of the *Idler*, that if his title had required any ſearch, he never would have found it. Every mode of life has its conveniencies. The *Idler*, who habituates himſelf to be ſatisfied with what he can moſt eaſily obtain, not only eſcapes la-

bours which are often fruitleſs, but ſometimes ſucceeds better than thoſe who deſpiſe all that is within their reach, and think every thing more valuable as it is harder to be acquired.

If ſimilitude of manners be a motive to kindneſs, the *Idler* may flatter himſelf with univerſal patronage. There is no ſingle character under which ſuch numbers are compriſed. Every man is, or hopes to be, an *Idler*. Even thoſe who ſeem to differ moſt from us are haſtening to increaſe our fraternity; as peace is the end of war, ſo to be idle is the ultimate purpoſe of the buſy.

There is perhaps no appellation by which a writer can better denote his kindred to the human ſpecies. It has been found hard to deſcribe man by an adequate definition. Some philoſophers have called him a reaſonable animal, but others have conſidered reaſon as a quality of which many creatures partake. He has been termed likewiſe a laughing animal; but it is ſaid that ſome men have never laughed. Perhaps man may be more properly diſtinguiſhed as an idle animal; for there is no man who is not ſometimes idle. It is at leaſt a definition from which none that ſhall find it in this paper can be excepted; for who can be more idle than the reader of the *Idler?*

That the definition may be complete, idleneſs muſt be not only the general, but the peculiar characteriſtick of man; and perhaps man is the only being that can properly be called idle, that does by others what he might do himſelf, or ſacrifices duty or pleaſure to the love of eaſe.

Scarcely

Scarcely any name can be imagined from which leſs envy or competition is to be dreaded. The *Idler* has no rivals or enemies. The man of buſineſs forgets him; the man of enterprize deſpiſes him; and though ſuch as tread the ſame track of life, fall commonly into jealouſy and diſcord, *Idlers* are always found to aſſociate in peace; and he who is moſt famed for doing nothing, is glad to meet another as idle as himſelf.

What is to be expected from this paper, whether it will be uniform or various, learned or familiar, ſerious or gay, political or moral, continued or interrupted, it is hoped that no reader will enquire. That the *Idler* has ſome ſcheme, cannot be doubted; for to form ſchemes is the *Idler*'s privilege. But though he has many projects in his head, he is now grown ſparing of communication, having obſerved, that his hearers are apt to remember what he forgets himſelf; that his tardineſs of execution expoſes him to the encroachments of thoſe who catch a hint and fall to work; and that very ſpecious plans, after long contrivance and pompous diſplays, have ſubſided in wearineſs without a trial, and without miſcarriage have been blaſted by deriſion.

Something the *Idler*'s character may be ſuppoſed to promiſe. Thoſe that are curious after diminutive hiſtory, who watch the revolutions of families, and the riſe and fall of characters either male or female, will hope to be gratified by this paper; for the *Idler* is always inquiſitive, and ſeldom retentive. He that delights in obloquy and ſatire, and wiſhes to ſee clouds gathering over any reputation that dazzles him with its brightneſs, will ſnatch up the *Idler*'s eſſays with

a beating heart. The *Idler* is naturally cenſorious; thoſe who attempt nothing themſelves, think every thing eaſily performed, and conſider the unſucceſsful always as criminal.

I think it neceſſary to give notice, that I make no contract, nor incur any obligation. If thoſe who depend on the *Idler* for intelligence and entertainment, ſhould ſuffer the diſappointment which commonly follows ill-placed expectations, they are to lay the blame only on themſelves.

Yet hope is not wholly to be caſt away. The *Idler*, though ſluggiſh, is yet alive, and may ſometimes be ſtimulated to vigour and activity. He may deſcend into profoundneſs, or tower into ſublimity; for the diligence of an *Idler* is rapid and impetuous, as ponderous bodies forced into velocity move with violence proportionate to their weight.

But theſe vehement exertions of intellect cannot be frequent, and he will therefore gladly receive help from any correſpondent, who ſhall enable him to pleaſe without his own labour. He excludes no ſtyle, he prohibits no ſubject; only let him that writes to the *Idler* remember, that his letters muſt not be long; no words are to be ſquandered in declarations of eſteem, or confeſſions of inability; conſcious dulneſs has little right to be prolix, and praiſe is not ſo welcome to the *Idler* as quiet.

NUMB. 2. SATURDAY, *April* 22, 1758.

Toto vix quater anno
Membranam. HOR.

MANY poſitions are often on the tongue, and ſeldom in the mind; there are many truths which every human being acknowledges and forgets. It is generally known, that he who expects much will be often diſappointed; yet diſappointment ſeldom cures us of expectation, or has any other effect, than that of producing a moral ſentence, or peeviſh exclamation. He that embarks in the voyage of life, will always wiſh to advance rather by the impulſe of the wind, than the ſtrokes of the oar; and many founder in the paſſage, while they lie waiting for the gale that is to waft them to their wiſh.

It will naturally be ſuſpected that the *Idler* has lately ſuffered ſome diſappointment, and that he does not talk thus gravely for nothing. No man is required to betray his own ſecrets. I will, however, confeſs, that I have now been a writer almoſt a week, and have not yet heard a ſingle word of praiſe, nor received one hint from any correſpondent.

Whence this negligence proceeds I am not able to diſcover. Many of my predeceſſors have thought themſelves obliged to return their acknowledgments in the ſecond paper, for the kind reception of the firſt; and in a ſhort time, apologies have become neceſſary to thoſe ingenious gentlemen and ladies, whoſe performances, though in the higheſt degree

elegant and learned, have been unavoidably delayed.

What then will be thought of me, who, having experienced no kindneſs, have no thanks to return; whom no gentleman or lady has yet enabled to give any cauſe of diſcontent, and who have therefore no opportunity of ſhewing how ſkilfully I can pacify reſentment, extenuate negligence, or palliate rejection?

I have long known that ſplendor of reputation is not to be counted among the neceſſaries of life, and therefore ſhall not much repine if praiſe be withheld till it is better deſerved. But ſurely I may be allowed to complain that, in a nation of authors, not one has thought me worthy of notice after ſo fair an invitation.

At the time when the rage of writing has ſeized the old and young, when the cook warbles her lyricks in the kitchen, and the thraſher vociferates his heroicks in the barn; when our traders deal out knowledge in bulky volumes, and our girls forſake their ſamplers to teach kingdoms wiſdom; it may ſeem very unneceſſary to draw any more from their proper occupations, by affording new opportunities of literary fame.

I ſhould be indeed unwilling to find that, for the ſake of correſponding with the *Idler*, the ſmith's iron had cooled on the anvil, or the ſpinſter's diſtaff ſtood unemployed. I ſolicit only the contributions of thoſe who have already devoted themſelves to literature, or, without any determinate attention, wander at large through the expanſe of life, and wear out the day in hearing at one place, what they *utter at another*.

Of

Of theſe, a great part are already writers. One has a friend in the country upon whom he exerciſes his powers; whoſe paſſions he raiſes and depreſſes; whoſe underſtanding he perplexes with paradoxes, or ſtrengthens by argument; whoſe admiration he courts, whoſe praiſes he enjoys; and who ſerves him inſtead of a ſenate or a theatre; as the young ſoldiers in the *Roman* camp learned the uſe of their weapons by fencing againſt a poſt in the place of an enemy.

Another has his pockets filled with eſſays and epigrams, which he reads, from houſe to houſe, to ſelect parties; and which his acquaintances are daily entreating him to withhold no longer from the impatience of the publick.

If among theſe any one is perſuaded that, by ſuch preludes of compoſition, he has qualified himſelf to appear in the open world, and is yet afraid of thoſe cenſures which they who have already written, and they who cannot write, are equally ready to fulminate againſt publick pretenders to fame, he may, by tranſmitting his performances to the *Idler*, make a cheap experiment of his abilities, and enjoy the pleaſure of ſucceſs, without the hazard of miſcarriage.

Many advantages not generally known ariſe from this method of ſtealing on the publick. The ſtanding author of the paper is always the object of critical malignity. Whatever is mean will be imputed to him, and whatever is excellent be aſcribed to his aſſiſtants. It does not much alter the event, that the author and his correſpondents are equally unknown; for the author, whoever he be, is an indi-

vidual, of whom every reader has ſome fixed idea and whom he is therefore unwilling to gratify with applauſe; but the praiſes given to his correſpondents are ſcattered in the air, none can tell on whom they will light, and therefore none are unwilling to beſtow them.

He that is known to contribute to a periodical work, needs no other caution than not to tell what particular pieces are his own: ſuch ſecrecy is indeed very difficult; but if it can be maintained, it is ſcarcely to be imagined at how ſmall an expence he may grow conſiderable.

A perſon of quality, by a ſingle paper, may engroſs the honour of a volume. Fame is indeed dealt with a hand leſs and leſs bounteous through the ſubordinate ranks, till it deſcends to the profeſſed author, who will find it very difficult to get more than he deſerves; but every man who does not want it, or who needs not value it, may have liberal allowances; and, for five letters in the year ſent to the *Idler*, of which perhaps only two are printed, will be promoted to the firſt rank of writers by thoſe who are weary of the preſent race of wits, and wiſh to ſink them into obſcurity before the luſtre of a name not yet known enough to be deteſted.

NUMB. 3. SATURDAY, *April* 29, 1758.

Otia vitæ
Solamur cantu. STAT.

IT has long been the complaint of thoſe who frequent the theatres, that all the dramatick art has been long exhauſted, and that the viciſſitudes of fortune, and accidents of life, have been ſhewn in every poſſible combination, till the firſt ſcene informs us of the laſt, and the play no ſooner opens, than every auditor knows how it will conclude. When a conſpiracy is formed in a tragedy, we gueſs by whom it will be detected; when a letter is dropt in a comedy, we can tell by whom it will be found. Nothing is now left for the poet but character and ſentiment, which are to make their way as they can, without the ſoft anxiety of ſuſpence, or the enlivening agitation of ſurprize.

A new paper lies under the ſame diſadvantages as a new play. There is danger leſt it be new without novelty. My earlier predeceſſors had their choice of vices and follies, and ſelected ſuch as were moſt likely to raiſe merriment or attract attention; they had the whole field of life before them, untrodden and unſurveyed; characters of every kind ſhot up in their way, and thoſe of the moſt luxuriant growth, or moſt conſpicuous colours, were naturally cropt by the firſt ſickle. They that follow are forced to peep into neglected corners, to

note

note the caſual varieties of the ſame ſpecies, and t recommend themſelves by minute induſtry, and di tinctions too ſubtle for common eyes.

Sometimes it may happen, that the haſte or negli gence of the firſt inquirers, has left enough behin to reward another ſearch; ſometimes new objec ſtart up under the eye, and he that is looking for on kind of matter, is amply gratified by the diſcover of another. But ſtill it muſt be allowed, that, a more is taken, leſs can remain, and every trut brought newly to light, impoveriſhes the min from which ſucceeding intellects are to dig the treaſures.

Many philoſophers imagine that the element themſelves may be in time exhauſted; that the ſun by ſhining long, will effuſe all its light; and that by the continual waſte of aqueous particles, the whol earth will at laſt become a ſandy deſart.

I would not adviſe my readers to diſturb them ſelves by contriving how they ſhall live without ligh and water. For the days of univerſal thirſt and per petual darkneſs are at a great diſtance. The ocea and the ſun will laſt our time, and we may leav poſterity to ſhift for themſelves.

But if the ſtores of nature are limited, much mor narrow bounds muſt be ſet to the modes of life; an mankind may want a moral or amuſing paper, man years before they ſhall be deprived of drink or day light. This want, which to the buſy and the inven tive may ſeem eaſily remediable by ſome ſubſtitute o other, the whole race of *Idlers* will feel with all th ſenſibility that ſuch torpid animals can ſuffer.

Whe

When I conſider the innumerable multitudes that, having no motive of deſire, or determination of will, lie freezing in perpetual inactivity, till ſome external impulſe puts them in motion; who awake in the morning, vacant of thought, with minds gaping for the intellectual food, which ſome kind eſſayiſt has been accuſtomed to ſupply; I am moved by the commiſeration with which all human beings ought to behold the diſtreſſes of each other, to try ſome expedients for their relief, and to enquire by what methods the liſtleſs may be actuated, and the empty be repleniſhed.

There are ſaid to be pleaſures in madneſs known only to madmen. There are certainly miſeries in idleneſs, which the *Idler* only can conceive. Theſe miſeries I have often felt and often bewailed. I know, by experience, how welcome is every avocation that ſummons the thoughts to a new image; and how much languor and laſſitude are relieved by that officiouſneſs which offers a momentary amuſement to him who is unable to find it for himſelf.

It is naturally indifferent to this race of men what entertainment they receive, ſo they are but entertained. They catch, with equal eagerneſs, at a moral lecture, or the memoirs of a robber; a prediction of the appearance of a comet, or the calculation of the chances of a lottery.

They might therefore eaſily be pleaſed, if they conſulted only their own minds; but thoſe who will not take the trouble to think for themſelves, have always ſomebody that thinks for them; and the difficulty in writing is to pleaſe thoſe from whom others learn to be pleaſed.

Much

Much miſchief is done in the world with very little intereſt or deſign. He that aſſumes the character of a critick, and juſtifies his claim by perpetual cenſure, imagines that he is hurting none but the author, and him he conſiders as a peſtilent animal, whom every other being has a right to perſecute; little does he think how many harmleſs men he involves in his own guilt, by teaching them to be noxious without malignity, and to repeat objections which they do not underſtand; or how many honeſt minds he debars from pleaſure, by exciting an artificial faſtidiouſneſs, and making them too wiſe to concur with their own ſenſations. He who is taught by a critick to diſlike that which pleaſed him in his natural ſtate, has the ſame reaſon to complain of his inſtructor, as the madman to rail at his doctor, who, when he thought himſelf maſter of Peru, phyſicked him to poverty.

If men will ſtruggle againſt their own advantage, they are not to expect that the *Idler* will take much pains upon them; he has himſelf to pleaſe as well as them, and has long learned, or endeavoured to learn, not to make the pleaſure of others too neceſſary to his own.

NUMB. 4. SATURDAY, *May* 6, 1758.

Πάντας γὰρ φιλέεσκε. HOM.

CHARITY, or tenderneſs for the poor, which is now juſtly conſidered, by a great part of mankind, as inſeparable from piety, and in which almoſt all the goodneſs of the preſent age conſiſts, is, I think, known only to thoſe who enjoy, either immediately or by tranſmiſſion, the light of revelation.

Thoſe ancient nations who have given us the wiſeſt models of government, and the brighteſt examples of patriotiſm, whoſe inſtitutions have been tranſcribed by all ſucceeding legiſlators, and whoſe hiſtory is ſtudied by every candidate for political or military reputation, have yet left behind them no mention of alms-houſes or hoſpitals, of places where age might repoſe, or ſickneſs be relieved.

The *Roman* emperors, indeed, gave large donatives to the citizens and ſoldiers, but theſe diſtributions were always reckoned rather popular than virtuous: nothing more was intended than an oſtentation of liberality, nor was any recompence expected, but ſuffrages and acclamations.

Their beneficence was merely occaſional; he that ceaſed to need the favour of the people, ceaſed likewiſe to court it; and therefore, no man thought it either neceſſary or wiſe to make any ſtanding proviſion for the needy, to look forwards to the wants of

poſterity,

poſterity, or to ſecure ſucceſſions of charity, for ſucceſſions of diſtreſs.

Compaſſion is by ſome reaſoners, on whom the name of philoſophers has been too eaſily conferred, reſolved into an affection merely ſelfiſh, an involuntary perception of pain at the involuntary ſight of a being like ourſelves languiſhing in miſery. But this ſenſation, if ever it be felt at all from the brute inſtinct of uninſtructed nature, will only produce effects deſultory and tranſient; it will never ſettle into a principle of action, or extend relief to calamities unſeen, in generations not yet in being.

The devotion of life or fortune to the ſuccour of the poor, is a height of virtue, to which humanity has never riſen by its own power. The charity of the *Mahometans* is a precept which their teacher evidently tranſplanted from the doctrines of Chriſtianity; and the care with which ſome of the oriental ſects attend, as is ſaid, to the neceſſities of the diſeaſed and indigent, may be added to the other arguments, which prove *Zoroaſter* to have borrowed his inſtitutions from the law of *Moſes*.

The preſent age, though not likely to ſhine hereafter among the moſt ſplendid periods of hiſtory, has yet given examples of charity, which may be very properly recommended to imitation. The equal diſtribution of wealth, which long commerce has produced, does not enable any ſingle hand to raiſe edifices of piety like fortified cities, to appropriate manors to religious uſes, or deal out ſuch large and laſting beneficence as was ſcattered over the land in ancient times, by thoſe who poſſeſſed counties or provinces. But no ſooner is a new ſpecies of miſery

brought

brought to view, and a deſign of relieving it profeſſed, than every hand is open to contribute ſomething, every tongue is buſied in ſolicitation, and every art of pleaſure is employed for a time in the intereſt of virtue.

The moſt apparent and preſſing miſeries incident to man, have now their peculiar houſes of reception and relief, and there are few among us raiſed however little above the danger of poverty, who may not juſtly claim, what is implored by the *Mahometans* in their moſt ardent benedictions, the prayers of the poor.

Among thoſe actions which the mind can moſt ſecurely review with unabated pleaſure, is that of having contributed to an hoſpital for the ſick. Of ſome kinds of charity the conſequences are dubious; ſome evils which beneficence has been buſy to remedy, are not certainly known to be very grievous to the ſufferer, or detrimental to the community; but no man can queſtion whether wounds and ſickneſs are not really painful; whether it be not worthy of a good man's care to reſtore thoſe to eaſe and uſefulneſs, from whoſe labour infants and women expect their bread, and who, by a caſual hurt, or lingering diſeaſe, lie pining in want and anguiſh, burthenſome to others, and weary of themſelves.

Yet as the hoſpitals of the preſent time ſubſiſt only by gifts beſtowed at pleaſure, without any ſolid fund of ſupport, there is danger leſt the blaze of charity, which now burns with ſo much heat and ſplendor, ſhould die away for want of laſting fuel; leſt faſhion ſhould ſuddenly withdraw her ſmile, and inconſtancy transfer the publick attention to ſomething

which may appear more eligible, becauſe it will be new.

Whatever is left in the hands of chance muſt be ſubject to viciſſitude; and when any eſtabliſhment is found to be uſeful, it ought to be the next care to make it permanent.

But man is a tranſitory being, and his deſigns muſt partake of the imperfections of their author. To confer duration is not always in our power. We muſt ſnatch the preſent moment, and employ it well, without too much ſolicitude for the future, and content ourſelves with reflecting that our part is performed. He that waits for an opportunity to do much at once, may breathe out his life in idle wiſhes, and regret, in the laſt hour, his uſeleſs intentions, and barren zeal.

The moſt active promoters of the preſent ſchemes of charity cannot be cleared from ſome inſtances of miſconduct, which may awaken contempt or cenſure, and haſten that neglect which is likely to come too ſoon of itſelf. The open competitions between different hoſpitals, and the animoſity with which their patrons oppoſe one another, may prejudice weak minds againſt them all. For it will not be eaſily believed, that any man can, for good reaſons, wiſh to exclude another from doing good. The ſpirit of charity can only be continued by a reconciliation of theſe ridiculous feuds; and therefore, inſtead of contentions who ſhall be the only benefactors to the needy, let there be no other ſtruggle than who ſhall be the firſt.

NUMB. 5. SATURDAY, *May* 13, 1758.

Κάλλος
Ἀντ' ἐγκέων ἁπάντων
Ἀντ' ἀσπίδων ἁπασῶν. ANAC.

OUR military operations are at laſt begun; our troops are marching in all the pomp of war, and a camp is marked out on the Iſle of Wight; the heart of every Engliſhman now ſwells with confidence, though ſomewhat ſoftened by generous compaſſion for the conſternation and diſtreſſes of our enemies.

This formidable armament and ſplendid march produce different effects upon different minds, according to the boundleſs diverſities of temper, occupation, and habits of thought.

Many a tender maiden conſiders her lover as already loſt, becauſe he cannot reach the camp but by croſſing the ſea; men of a more political underſtanding, are perſuaded that we ſhall now ſee, in a few days, the ambaſſadors of France ſupplicating for pity. Some are hoping for a bloody battle, becauſe a bloody battle makes a vendible narrative; ſome are compoſing ſongs of victory; ſome planning arches of triumph; and ſome are mixing fireworks for the celebration of a peace.

Of all extenſive and complicated objects different parts are ſelected by different eyes; and minds are variouſly affected, as they vary their attention. The care of the publick is now fixed upon our ſoldiers,

who are leaving their native country to wander, none can tell how long, in the pathleſs deſarts of the *Iſle of Wight*. The tender ſigh for their ſufferings, and the gay drink to their ſucceſs. I, who look, or believe myſelf to look, with more philoſophick eyes on human affairs, muſt confeſs, that I ſaw the troops march with little emotion; my thoughts were fixed upon other ſcenes, and the tear ſtole into my eyes, not for thoſe who were going away, but for thoſe who were left behind.

We have no reaſon to doubt but our troops will proceed with proper caution; there are men among them who can take care of themſelves. But how ſhall the ladies endure without them? By what arts can they, who have long had no joy but from the civilities of a ſoldier, now amuſe their hours, and ſoften their ſeparation?

[illegible] thouſand men, now deſtined to different [illegible], if we allow each to have been occaſionally [illegible] only to four women, a ſhort computation will inform us, that two hundred thouſand ladies are left to languiſh in diſtreſs; two hundred thouſand ladies, who muſt run to ſales and auctions without an attendant; ſit at the play, without a critick to direct their opinion; buy their fans by their own judgment; diſpoſe ſhells by their own invention; walk in the mall without a gallant; go to the gardens without a protector; and ſhuffle cards with vain impatience, for want of a fourth to complete the party.

Of theſe ladies, ſome, I hope, have lap-dogs, and ſome monkies; but they are unſatisfactory compa-

nions.

nions. Many uſeful offices are performed by men of ſcarlet, to which neither dog nor monkey has adequate abilities. A parrot, indeed, is as fine as a colonel, and if he has been much uſed to good company, is not wholly without converſation; but a parrot, after all, is a poor little creature, and has neither ſword nor ſhoulder-knot, can neither dance nor play at cards.

Since the ſoldiers muſt obey the call of their duty, and go to that ſide of the kingdom which faces *France*, I know not why the ladies, who cannot live without them, ſhould not follow them. The prejudices and pride of man have long preſumed the ſword and ſpindle made for different hands, and denied the other ſex to partake the grandeur of military glory. This notion may be conſiſtently enough received in *France*, where the ſalick law excludes females from the throne; but we, who allow them to be ſovereigns, may ſurely ſuppoſe them capable to be ſoldiers.

It were to be wiſhed that ſome man, whoſe experience and authority might enforce regard, would propoſe that our encampments for the preſent year ſhould compriſe an equal number of men and women, who ſhould march and fight in mingled bodies. If proper colonels were once appointed, and the drums ordered to beat for female volunteers, our regiments would ſoon be filled without the reproach or cruelty of an impreſs.

Of theſe heroines, ſome might ſerve on foot, under the denomination of the *Female Buffs*, and ſome on horſeback, with the title of *Lady Huſſars*.

What objections can be made to this ſcheme I have endeavoured maturely to conſider; and cannot find that a modern ſoldier has any duties, except that of obedience, which a lady cannot perform. If the hair has loſt its powder, a lady has a puff; if a coat be ſpotted, a lady has a bruſh. Strength is of leſs importance ſince fire-arms have been uſed; blows of the hand are now ſeldom exchanged; and what is there to be done in the charge or the retreat beyond the powers of a ſprightly maiden?

Our maſculine ſquadrons will not ſuppoſe themſelves diſgraced by their auxiliaries, till they have done ſomething which women could not have done. The troops of *Braddock* never ſaw their enemies, and perhaps were defeated by women. If our *American* general had headed an army of girls, he might ſtill have built a fort and taken it. Had *Minorca* been defended by a female garriſon, it might have been ſurrendered, as it was, without a breach; and I cannot but think, that ſeven thouſand women might have ventured to look at *Rochfort*, ſack a village, rob a vineyard, and return in ſafety.

NUMB. 6. SATURDAY, *May* 20, 1758.

Ταμεῖον ἀρετῆς γεναῖα γυνή. GR. PRO.

THE lady who had undertaken to ride on one horſe a thouſand miles in a thouſand hours, has completed her journey in little more than two-thirds of the time ſtipulated, and was conducted through the laſt mile with triumphal honours. Acclamation ſhouted before her, and all the flowers of the ſpring were ſcattered in her way.

Every heart ought to rejoice when true merit is diſtinguiſhed with publick notice. I am far from wiſhing either to the amazon or her horſe any diminution of happineſs or fame, and cannot but lament that they were not more amply and ſuitably rewarded.

There was once a time when wreaths of bays or oak were conſidered as recompences equal to the moſt weariſome labours and terrifick dangers, and when the miſeries of long marches and ſtormy ſeas were at once driven from the remembrance by the fragrance of a garland.

If this heroine had been born in ancient times, ſhe might perhaps have been delighted with the ſimplicity of ancient gratitude; or if any thing was wanting to full ſatisfaction, ſhe might have ſupplied the deficiency with the hope of deification, and anticipated the altars that would be raiſed, and the vows that would be made, by future candidates for equeſtrian glory, to the patroneſs of the race and the goddeſs of the ſtable.

But fate reſerved her for a more enlightened age, which has diſcovered leaves and flowers to be tranſitory things; which conſiders profit as the end of honour; and rates the event of every undertaking only by the money that is gained or loſt. In theſe days, to ſtrew the road with daiſies and lilies, is to mock merit and delude hope. The toyman will not give his jewels, nor the mercer meaſure out his ſilks, for vegetable coin. A primroſe, though picked up under the feet of the moſt renowned courſer, will neither be received as a ſtake at cards, nor procure a ſeat at an opera, nor buy candles for a rout, nor lace for a livery. And though there are many virtuoſos, whoſe ſole ambition is to poſſeſs ſomething which can be found in no other hand, yet ſome are more accuſtomed to ſtore their cabinets by theft than purchaſe, and none of them would either ſteal or buy one of the flowers of gratulation till he knows that all the reſt are totally deſtroyed.

Little therefore did it avail this wonderful lady to be received, however joyfully, with ſuch obſolete and barren ceremonies of praiſe. Had the way been covered with guineas, though but for the tenth part of the laſt mile, ſhe would have conſidered her ſkill and diligence as not wholly loſt; and might have rejoiced in the ſpeed and perſeverance which had left her ſuch ſuperfluity of time, that ſhe could at leiſure gather her reward without the danger of *Atalanta*'s miſcarriage.

So much ground could not, indeed, have been paved with gold but at a large expence, and we are nt engaged in war, which demands and en- *es frugality*. But common rules are made only for

for common life, and ſome deviation from general policy may be allowed in favour of a lady that rode a thouſand miles in a thouſand hours.

Since the ſpirit of antiquity ſo much prevails amongſt us, that even on this great occaſion we have given flowers inſtead of money, let us at leaſt complete our imitation of the ancients, and endeavour to tranſmit to poſterity the memory of that virtue, which we conſider as ſuperior to pecuniary recompence. Let an equeſtrian ſtatue of this heroine be erected, near the ſtarting-poſt on the heath of *Newmarket*, to fill kindred ſouls with emulation, and tell the grand-daughters of our grand-daughters what an *Engliſh* maiden has once performed.

As events, however illuſtrious, are ſoon obſcured if they are intruſted to tradition, I think it neceſſary, that the pedeſtal ſhould be inſcribed with a conciſe account of this great performance. The compoſition of this narrative ought not to be committed raſhly to improper hands. If the rhetoricians of *Newmarket*, who may be ſuppoſed likely to conceive in its full ſtrength the dignity of the ſubject, ſhould undertake to expreſs it, there is danger leſt they admit ſome phraſes which, though well underſtood at preſent, may be ambiguous in another century. If poſterity ſhould read on a publick monument, that *the lady carried her horſe a thouſand miles in a thouſand hours*, they may think that the ſtatue and inſcription are at variance, becauſe one will repreſent the horſe as carrying his lady, and the other tell that the lady carried her horſe.

Some doubts likewiſe may be raiſed by ſpeculatiſts, and ſome controverſies be agitated among hiſtorians,

concerning the motive as well as the manner of the action. As it will be known, that this wonder was performed in a time of war, ſome will ſuppoſe that the lady was frighted by invaders, and fled to preſerve her life or her chaſtity: others will conjecture, that ſhe was thus honoured for ſome intelligence carried of the enemy's deſigns: ſome will think that ſhe brought news of a victory; others, that ſhe was commiſſioned to tell of a conſpiracy; and ſome will congratulate themſelves on their acuter penetration, and find, that all theſe notions of patriotiſm and publick ſpirit are improbable and chimerical; they will confidently tell, that ſhe only ran away from her guardians, and that the true cauſes of her ſpeed were fear and love.

Let it therefore be carefully mentioned, that by this performance, *ſhe won her wager*; and, leſt this ſhould, by any change of manners, ſeem an inadequate or incredible incitement, let it be added, that at this time the original motives of human actions had loſt their influence; that the love of praiſe was extinct; the fear of infamy was become ridiculous; and the only wiſh of an *Engliſhman* was, *to win his wager.*

NUMB. 7. SATURDAY, *May* 27, 1758.

ONE of the principal amuſements of the *Idler* is to read the works of thoſe minute hiſtorians the writers of news, who, though contemptuouſly overlooked by the compoſers of bulky volumes, are yet neceſſary in a nation where much wealth produces much leiſure, and one part of the people has nothing to do but to obſerve the lives and fortunes of the other.

To us, who are regaled every morning and evening with intelligence, and are ſupplied from day to day with materials for converſation, it is difficult to conceive how man can ſubſiſt without a news-paper, or to what entertainment companies can aſſemble, in thoſe wide regions of the earth that have neither *Chronicles* nor *Magazines*, neither *Gazettes* nor *Advertiſers*, neither *Journals* nor *Evening-Poſts*.

There are never great numbers in any nation, whoſe reaſon or invention can find employment for their tongues, who can raiſe a pleaſing diſcourſe from their own ſtock of ſentiments and images; and thoſe few who have qualified themſelves by ſpeculation for general diſquiſitions, are ſoon left without an audience. The common talk of men muſt relate to facts in which the talkers have, or think they have, an intereſt; and where ſuch facts cannot be known, the pleaſures of ſociety will be merely ſenſual. Thus the natives of the *Mahometan* empires, who approach moſt nearly to *European* civility, have no higher plea-

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ſure at their convivial aſſemblies than to hear a piper, or gaze upon a tumbler, and no company can keep together longer than they are diverted by ſounds or ſhows.

All foreigners remark, that the knowledge of the common people of *England* is greater than that of any other vulgar. This ſuperiority we undoubtedly owe to the rivulets of intelligence, which are continually trickling among us, which every one may catch, and of which every one partakes.

This univerſal diffuſion of inſtruction is, perhaps, not wholly without its inconveniences; it certainly fills the nation with ſuperficial diſputants; enables thoſe to talk who were born to work; and affords information ſufficient to elate vanity, and ſtiffen obſtinacy, but too little to enlarge the mind into complete ſkill for full comprehenſion.

Whatever is found to gratify the publick, will be multiplied by the emulation of venders beyond neceſſity or uſe. This plenty indeed produces cheapneſs, but cheapneſs always ends in negligence and depravation.

The compilation of news-papers is often committed to narrow and mercenary minds, not qualified for the taſk of delighting or inſtructing; who are content to fill their paper, with whatever matter, without induſtry to gather, or diſcernment to ſelect.

Thus journals are daily multiplied without increaſe of knowledge. The tale of the morning paper is told again in the evening, and the narratives of the evening are bought again in the morning. Theſe repetitions, indeed, waſte time, but they do not *ſhorten it*. The moſt eager peruſer of news is tired

before he has completed his labour, and many a man who enters the coffee-houſe in his night-gown and ſlippers, is called away to his ſhop, or his dinner, before he has well conſidered the ſtate of *Europe*.

It is diſcovered by *Reaumur*, that ſpiders might make ſilk, if they could be perſuaded to live in peace together. The writers of news, if they could be confederated, might give more pleaſure to the publick. The morning and evening authors might divide an event between them; a ſingle action, and that not of much importance, might be gradually diſcovered, ſo as to vary a whole week with joy, anxiety, and conjecture.

We know that a *French* ſhip of war was lately taken by a ſhip of *England*; but this event was ſuffered to burſt upon us all at once, and then what we knew already was echoed from day to day, and from week to week.

Let us ſuppoſe theſe ſpiders of literature to ſpin together, and enquire to what an extenſive web ſuch another event might be regularly drawn, and how ſix morning and ſix evening writers might agree to retail their articles.

On *Monday Morning* the Captain of a ſhip might arrive, who left the *Friſeur* of *France*, and the *Bull-dog*, Captain *Grim*, in ſight of one another, ſo that an engagement ſeemed unavoidable.

Monday Evening. A ſound of cannon was heard off *Cape Finiſterre*, ſuppoſed to be thoſe of the *Bull-dog* and *Friſeur*.

Tueſday Morning. It was this morning reported, that the *Bulldog* engaged the *Friſeur*, yard-arm and yard-arm, three glaſſes and a half, but was obliged to

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ſheer off for want of powder. It is hoped that enquiry will be made into this affair in a proper place.

Tueſday Evening. The account of the engagement between the *Bulldog* and *Friſeur* was premature.

Wedneſday Morning. Another expreſs is arrived, which brings news, that the *Friſeur* had loſt all her maſts, and three hundred of her men, in the late engagement; and that Captain *Grim* is come into harbour much ſhattered.

Wedneſday Evening. We hear that the brave Captain *Grim*, having expended his powder, propoſed to enter the *Friſeur* ſword in hand; but that his lieutenant, the nephew of a certain nobleman, remonſtrated againſt it.

Thurſday Morning. We wait impatiently for a full account of the late engagement between the *Bulldog* and *Friſeur.*

Thurſday Evening. It is ſaid that the order of the *Bath* will be ſent to Captain *Grim.*

Friday Morning. A certain Lord of the Admiralty has been heard to ſay of a certain Captain, that if he had done his duty, a certain *French* ſhip might have been taken. It was not thus that merit was rewarded in the days of *Cromwell.*

Friday Evening. There is certain information at the Admiralty, that the *Friſeur* is taken, after a reſiſtance of about two hours.

Saturday Morning. A letter from one of the gunners of the *Bulldog* mentions the taking of the *Friſeur*, and attributes their ſucceſs wholly to the bravery and reſolution of Captain *Grim*, who never owed any of his advancement to borough-jobbers, or any other *corrupters of* the people.

Saturday

Saturday Evening. Captain *Grim* arrived at the Admiralty, with an account that he engaged the *Friſeur*, a ſhip of equal force with his own, off *Cape Finiſterre*, and took her after an obſtinate reſiſtance, having killed one hundred and fifty of the *French*, with the loſs of ninety-five of his own men.

NUMB. 8. SATURDAY, *June* 3, 1758.

To the IDLER.

SIR,

IN time of publick danger, it is every man's duty to withdraw his thoughts in ſome meaſure from his private intereſt, and employ part of his time for the general welfare. National conduct ought to be the reſult of national wiſdom, a plan formed by mature conſideration and diligent ſelection out of all the ſchemes which may be offered, and all the information which can be procured.

In a battle, every man ſhould fight as if he was the ſingle champion; in preparations for war, every man ſhould think, as if the laſt event depended on his counſel. None can tell what diſcoveries are within his reach, or how much he may contribute to the publick ſafety.

Full of theſe conſiderations, I have carefully reviewed the proceſs of the war, and find, what every other man has found, that we have hitherto added nothing to our military reputation: that at one time

we have been beaten by enemies whom we did not ſee; and at another, have avoided the ſight of enemies leſt we ſhould be beaten.

Whether our troops are defective in diſcipline or in courage, is not very uſeful to inquire; they evidently want ſomething neceſſary to ſucceſs; and he that ſhall ſupply that want will deſerve well of his country.

To learn of an enemy has always been accounted politick and honourable, and therefore I hope it will raiſe no prejudices againſt my project, to confeſs that I borrowed it from a *Frenchman*.

When the Iſle of *Rhodes* was, many centuries ago, in the hands of that military order now called the *Knights of Malta*, it was ravaged by a dragon, who inhabited a den under a rock, from which he iſſued forth when he was hungry or wanton, and without fear or mercy devoured men and beaſts as they came in his way. Many councils were held, and many devices offered, for his deſtruction; but as his back was armed with impenetrable ſcales, none would venture to attack him. At laſt *Dudon*, a *French* knight, undertook the deliverance of the iſland. From ſome place of ſecurity he took a view of the dragon, or, as a modern ſoldier would ſay, *reconnoitred* him, and obſerved that his belly was naked and vulnerable. He then returned home to take his *arrangements*; and, by a very exact imitation of nature, made a dragon of paſteboard, in the belly of which he put beef and mutton, and accuſtomed two ſturdy maſtiffs to feed themſelves, by tearing their way to the concealed fleſh. When his dogs were well practiſed in this method of plunder, he marched

marched out with them at his heels, and ſhewed them the dragon; they ruſhed upon him in queſt of their dinner; *Dudon* battered his ſcull, while they lacerated his belly; and neither his ſting nor claws were able to defend him.

Something like this might be practiſed in our preſent ſtate. Let a fortification be raiſed on *Saliſbury-Plain*, reſembling *Breſt*, or *Toulon*, or *Paris* itſelf, with all the uſual preparations for defence: let the incloſure be filled with beef and ale: let the ſoldiers, from ſome proper eminence, ſee ſhirts waving upon lines, and here and there a plump landlady hurrying about with pots in her hands. When they are ſufficiently animated to advance, lead them in exact order, with fife and drum, to that ſide whence the wind blows, till they come within the ſcent of roaſt meat and tobacco. Contrive that they may approach the place faſting about an hour after dinner-time, aſſure them that there is no danger, and command an attack.

If nobody within either moves or ſpeaks, it is not unlikely that they may carry the place by ſtorm; but if a panick ſhould ſeize them, it will be proper to defer the enterprize to a more hungry hour. When they have entered, let them fill their bellies and return to the camp.

On the next day let the ſame place be ſhewn them again, but with ſome additions of ſtrength or terror. I cannot pretend to inform our generals through what gradations of danger they ſhall train their men to fortitude. They beſt know what the ſoldiers and what themſelves can bear. It will be proper that the war ſhould every day vary its appearance,

pearance. Sometimes, as they mount the rampart, a cook may throw fat upon the fire, to accuſtom them to a ſudden blaze; and ſometimes, by the clatter of empty pots, they may be inured to formidable noiſes. But let it never be forgotten, that victory muſt repoſe with a full belly.

In time it will be proper to bring our *French* priſoners from the coaſt, and place them upon the walls in martial order. At their firſt appearance their hands muſt be tied, but they may be allowed to grin. In a month they may guard the place with their hands looſed, provided that on pain of death they be forbidden to ſtrike.

By this method our army will ſoon be brought to look an enemy in the face. But it has been lately obſerved, that fear is received by the ear as well as the eyes, and the *Indian* war-cry is repreſented as too dreadful to be endured; as a ſound that will force the braveſt veteran to drop his weapon, and deſert his rank; that will deafen his ear, and chill his breaſt; that will neither ſuffer him to hear orders or to feel ſhame, or retain any ſenſibility but the dread of death.

That the ſavage clamours of naked barbarians ſhould thus terrify troops diſciplined to war, and ranged in array with arms in their hands, is ſurely ſtrange. But this is no time to reaſon. I am of opinion, that, by a proper mixture of aſſes, bulls, turkeys, geeſe, and tragedians, a noiſe might be procured equally horrid with the war-cry. When our men have been encouraged by frequent victories, nothing will remain but to qualify them for extreme *danger*, by a ſudden concert of terrifick vociferation.

tion. When they have endured this laſt trial, let them be led to action, as men who are no longer to be frightened; as men who can bear at once the grimaces of the *Gauls*, and the howl of the *Americans*.

NUMB. 9. SATURDAY, *June* 10, 1758.

To the IDLER.

SIR,

I HAVE read you; that is a favour few authors can boaſt of having received from me beſides yourſelf. My intention in telling you of it is to inform you, that you have both pleaſed and angered me. Never did writer appear ſo delightful to me as you did when you adopted the name of the *Idler*. But what a falling-off was there when your firſt production was brought to light! A natural irreſiſtible attachment to that favourable paſſion, *idling*, had led me to hope for indulgence from the *Idler*, but I find him a ſtranger to the title.

What rules has he propoſed totally to unbrace the ſlackened nerve; to ſhade the heavy eye of inattention; to give the ſmooth feature and the uncontracted muſcle; or procure inſenſibility to the whole animal compoſition?

Theſe were ſome of the placid bleſſings I promiſed myſelf the enjoyment of, when I committed violence upon myſelf, by muſtering up all my ſtrength to ſet

about reading you; but I am diſappointed in them all, and the ſtroke of eleven in the morning is ſtill as terrible to me as before, and I find putting on my clothes ſtill as painful and laborious. Oh that our climate would permit that original nakedneſs which the thrice happy *Indians* to this day enjoy! How many unſolicitous hours ſhould I baſk away, warmed in bed by the ſun's glorious beams, could I, like them, tumble from thence in a moment, when neceſſity obliges me to endure the torment of getting upon my legs.

But wherefore do I talk to you upon ſubjects of this delicate nature; you who ſeem ignorant of the inexpreſſible charms of the elbow-chair, attended with a ſoft ſtool for the elevation of the feet! Thus, vacant of thought, do I indulge the live-long day.

You may define happineſs as you pleaſe; I embrace that opinion which makes it conſiſt in the abſence of pain. To reflect is pain; to ſtir is pain; therefore I never reflect or ſtir but when I cannot help it. Perhaps you will call my ſcheme of life indolence, and therefore think the *Idler* excuſed from taking any notice of me: but I have always looked upon indolence and idleneſs as the ſame; and ſo deſire you will now and then, while you profeſs yourſelf of our fraternity, take ſome notice of me, and others in my ſituation, who think they have a right to your aſſiſtance; or relinquiſh the name.

You may publiſh, burn, or deſtroy this, juſt as you are in the humour; it is ten to one but I forget that I wrote it, before it reaches you. I believe you may find a motto for it in Horace, but I cannot reach him

him without getting out of my chair; that is a ſufficient reaſon for my not affixing any.—And being obliged to ſit upright to ring the bell for my ſervant to convey this to the penny-poſt, if I ſlip the opportunity of his being now in the room, makes me break off abruptly.

This correſpondent, whoever he be, is not to be diſmiſſed without ſome tokens of regard. There is no mark more certain of a genuine *Idler*, than uneaſineſs without moleſtation, and complaint without a grievance.

Yet my gratitude to the contributor of half a paper ſhall not wholly overpower my ſincerity. I muſt inform you, that, with all his pretenſions, he that calls for directions to be idle, is yet but in the rudiments of idleneſs, and has attained neither the practice nor theory of waſting life. The true nature of idleneſs he will know in time, by continuing to be idle. *Virgil* tells us of an impetuous and rapid being, that acquires ſtrength by motion. The *Idler* acquires weight by lying ſtill.

The *vis inertiæ*, the quality of reſiſting all external impulſe, is hourly increaſing; the reſtleſs and troubleſome faculties of attention and diſtinction, reflection on the paſt, and ſolicitude for the future, by a long indulgence of idleneſs, will, like tapers in unelaſtic air, be gradually extinguiſhed; and the officious lover, the vigilant ſoldier, the buſy trader, may, by a judicious compoſure of his mind, ſink into a ſtate approaching to that of brute matter; in which he ſhall retain the conſciouſneſs of his own

exiſtence, only by an obtuſe languor, and drowſy diſcontent.

This is the loweſt ſtage to which the favourites of idleneſs can deſcend; theſe regions of undelighted quiet can be entered by few. Of thoſe that are preparing to ſink down into their ſhade, ſome are rouſed into action by avarice or ambition, ſome are awakened by the voice of fame, ſome allured by the ſmile of beauty, and many withheld by the importunities of want. Of all the enemies of idleneſs, want is the moſt formidable. Fame is ſoon found to be a ſound, and love a dream; avarice and ambition may be juſtly ſuſpected of privy confederacies with idleneſs; for when they have for a while protected their votaries, they often deliver them up to end their lives under her dominion. Want always ſtruggles againſt idleneſs, but want herſelf is often overcome; and every hour ſhews the careful obſerver, thoſe who had rather live in eaſe than in plenty.

So wide is the reign of idleneſs, and ſo powerful her influence. But ſhe does not immediately confer all her gifts. My correſpondent, who ſeems, with all his errors, worthy of advice, muſt be told, that he is calling too haſtily for the laſt effuſion of total inſenſibility. Whatever he may have been taught by unſkilful *Idlers* to believe, labour is neceſſary in his initiation to idleneſs. He that never labours may know the pains of idleneſs, but not the pleaſure. The comfort is, that if he devotes himſelf to inſenſibility, he will daily lengthen the intervals of idleneſs, and ſhorten thoſe of labour, till at laſt he will lie down to reſt, and no longer diſturb the world or *himſelf by* buſtle or competition.

Thus

Thus I have endeavoured to give him that information which, perhaps, after all, he did not want; for a true *Idler* often calls for that which he knows is never to be had, and aſks queſtions which he does not deſire ever to be anſwered.

NUMB. 10. SATURDAY, *June* 17, 1758.

CREDULITY, or confidence of opinion too great for the evidence from which opinion is derived, we find to be a general weakneſs imputed by every ſect and party to all others, and indeed by every man to every other man.

Of all kinds of credulity, the moſt obſtinate and wonderful is that of political zealots; of men, who being numbered, they know not how or why, in any of the parties that divide a ſtate, reſign the uſe of their own eyes and ears, and reſolve to believe nothing that does not favour thoſe whom they profeſs to follow.

The bigot of philoſophy is ſeduced by authorities which he has not always opportunities to examine, is intangled in ſyſtems by which truth and falſehood are inextricably complicated, or undertakes to talk on ſubjects which nature did not form him able to comprehend.

The Carteſian, who denies that his horſe feels the ſpur, or that the hare is afraid when the hounds approach her; the diſciple of *Malbranche*, who maintains that the man was not hurt by the bullet, which,

according to vulgar apprehenſion, ſwept away legs; the follower of *Berkeley*, who, while he writing at his table, declares that he has nei table, paper, nor fingers; have all the honour at l of being deceived by fallacies not eaſily detec and may plead that they did not forſake truth, for appearances which they were not able to dil guiſh from it.

But the man who engages in a party has ſeldo do with any thing remote or abſtruſe. The pre ſtate of things is before his eyes; and, if he ca be ſatisfied without retroſpection, yet he ſeldom tends his views beyond the hiſtorical events of laſt century. All the knowledge that he can is within his attainment, and moſt of the argum which he can hear are within his capacity.

Yet ſo it is that an *Idler* meets every hour of life with men who have different opinions every thing paſt, preſent, and future; who deny moſt notorious facts, contradict the moſt co truths, and perſiſt in aſſerting to-day what the ſerted yeſterday, in defiance of evidence, and tempt of confutation.

Two of my companions, who are grown ol idleneſs, are *Tom Tempeſt* and *Jack Sneaker*. Bo them conſider themſelves as neglected by their ties, and therefore intitled to credit, for why ſh they favour ingratitude? They are both men o tegrity, where no factious intereſt is to be prom and both lovers of truth, when they are not h with political debate.

Tom Tempeſt is a ſteady friend to the hou *Stuart*. He can recount the prodigies that hav

p

n the ſky, and the calamities that have af-
ıe nation every year from the revolution,
opinion, that if the exiled family had con-
› reign, there would have neither been worms
ıips nor caterpillars on our trees. He won-
: the nation was not awakened by the hard
ı revocation of the true king, and is hourly
ıat the whole iſland will be loſt in the ſea.
:ves that king *William* burned *Whitehall* that
t ſteal the furniture, and that *Tillotſon* died
t. Of queen *Anne* he ſpeaks with more ten-
owns that ſhe meant well, and can tell by
ıd why ſhe was poiſoned. In the ſucceeding
l has been corruption, malice, and deſign.
eves that nothing ill has ever happened
forty years by chance or error; he holds
battle of *Dettingen* was won by miſtake, and
'ontenoy loſt by contract; that the *Victory* was
a private order; that *Cornhill* was fired by
s from the council; and the arch of *Weſt-
ridge* was ſo contrived as to ſink on purpoſe
nation might be put to charge. He con-
e new road to *Iſlington* as an encroachment
y, and often aſſerts that *broad wheels* will be
of *England*.

ı generally vehement and noiſy, but never-
as ſome ſecrets which he always communi-
a whiſper. Many and many a time has *Tom*
in a corner, that our miſeries were almoſt
l, and that we ſhould ſee, in a month, an-
›narch on the throne; the time elapſes with-
:volution; *Tom* meets me again with new

intelligence, the whole ſcheme is now ſettled, and we ſhall ſee great events in another month.

Jack Sneaker is a hearty adherent to the preſent eſtabliſhment; he has known thoſe who ſaw the bed into which the pretender was conveyed in a warming-pan. He often rejoices that the nation was not enſlaved by the *Iriſh*. He believes that king *William* never loſt a battle, and that if he had lived one year longer he would have conquered *France*. He holds that *Charles* the firſt was a papiſt. He allows there were ſome good men in the reign of queen *Anne*, but the peace of *Utrecht* brought a blaſt upon the nation, and has been the cauſe of all the evil that we have ſuffered to the preſent hour. He believes that the ſcheme of the *South Sea* was well intended, but that it miſcarried by the influence of *France*. He conſiders a ſtanding army as the bulwark of liberty, thinks us ſecured from corruption by ſeptennial parliaments, relates how we are enriched and ſtrengthened by the electoral dominions, and declares that the publick debt is a bleſſing to the nation.

Yet amidſt all this proſperity, poor *Jack* is hourly diſturbed by the dread of popery. He wonders that ſome ſtricter laws are not made againſt papiſts, and is ſometimes afraid that they are buſy with *French* gold among the biſhops and judges.

He cannot believe that the nonjurors are ſo quiet for nothing, they muſt certainly be forming ſome plot for the eſtabliſhment of popery; he does not think the preſent oaths ſufficiently binding, and wiſhes that ſome better ſecurity could be found for the ſucceſſion of *Hanover*. He is zealous for the naturali-

naturalization of foreign proteſtants, and rejoiced at the admiſſion of the *Jews* to the *Engliſh* privileges, becauſe he thought a *Jew* would never be a papiſt.

NUMB. 11. SATURDAY, *June* 24, 1758.

IT is commonly obſerved, that when two *Engliſhmen* meet, their firſt talk is of the weather; they are in haſte to tell each other, what each muſt already know, that it is hot or cold, bright or cloudy, windy or calm.

There are, among the numerous lovers of ſubtilties and paradoxes, ſome who derive the civil inſtitutions of every country from its climate, who impute freedom and ſlavery to the temperature of the air, can fix the meridian of vice and virtue, and tell at what degree of latitude we are to expect courage or timidity, knowledge or ignorance.

From theſe dreams of idle ſpeculation, a ſlight ſurvey of life, and a little knowledge of hiſtory, is ſufficient to awaken any enquirer, whoſe ambition of diſtinction has not overpowered his love of truth. Forms of government are ſeldom the reſult of much deliberation; they are framed by chance in popular aſſemblies, or in conquered countries by deſpotick authority. Laws are often occaſional, often capricious, made always by a few, and ſometimes by a ſingle voice. Nations have changed their characters; ſlavery is now no where more patiently endured,

dured, than in countries once inhabited by the zealots of liberty.

But national cuſtoms can ariſe only from general agreement; they are not impoſed, but choſen, and are continued only by the continuance of their cauſe. An *Engliſhman*'s notice of the weather, is the natural conſequence of changeable ſkies and uncertain ſeaſons. In many parts of the world, wet weather and dry are regularly expected at certain periods; but in our iſland every man goes to ſleep, unable to gueſs whether he ſhall behold in the morning a bright or cloudy atmoſphere, whether his reſt ſhall be lulled by a ſhower, or broken by a tempeſt. We therefore rejoice mutually at good weather, as at an eſcape from ſomething that we feared, and mutually complain of bad, as of the loſs of ſomething that we hoped.

Such is the reaſon of our practice; and who ſhall treat it with contempt? Surely not the attendant on a court, whoſe buſineſs is to watch the looks of a being weak and fooliſh as himſelf, and whoſe vanity is to recount the names of men, who might drop into nothing, and leave no vacuity; nor the proprietor of funds, who ſtops his acquaintance in the ſtreet to tell him of the loſs of half-a-crown; not the enquirer after news, who fills his head with foreign events, and talks of ſkirmiſhes and ſieges, of which no conſequence will ever reach his hearers or himſelf. The weather is a nobler and more intereſting ſubject; it is the preſent ſtate of the ſkies and of the earth, on which plenty and famine are ſuſpended, on which millions depend for the neceſſaries of life.

The

The weather is frequently mentioned for another reaſon, leſs honourable to my dear countrymen. Our diſpoſitions too frequently change with the colour of the ſky; and when we find ourſelves cheerful and good-natured, we naturally pay our acknowledgments to the powers of ſun-ſhine; or if we ſink into dullneſs and peeviſhneſs, look round the horizon for an excuſe, and charge our diſcontent upon an eaſterly wind or a cloudy day.

Surely nothing is more reproachful to a being endowed with reaſon, than to reſign its powers to the influence of the air, and live in dependance on the weather and the wind, for the only bleſſings which nature has put into our power, tranquillity and benevolence. To look up to the ſky for the nutriment of our bodies, is the condition of nature; to call upon the ſun for peace and gaiety, or deprecate the clouds leſt ſorrow ſhould overwhelm us, is the cowardice of idleneſs, and the idolatry of folly.

Yet even in this age of enquiry and knowledge, when ſuperſtition is driven away, and omens and prodigies have loſt their terrors, we find this folly countenanced by frequent examples. Thoſe that laugh at the portentous glare of a comet, and hear a crow with equal tranquillity from the right or left, will yet talk of times and ſituations proper for intellectual performances, will imagine the fancy exalted by vernal breezes, and the reaſon invigorated by a bright calm.

If men who have given up themſelves to fanciful credulity would confine their conceits in their own minds, they might regulate their lives by the barometer, with inconvenience only to themſelves; but

to fill the world with accounts of intellects ſubject to ebb and flow, of one genius that awakened in the ſpring, and another that ripened in the autumn, of one mind expanded in the ſummer, and of another concentrated in the winter, is no leſs dangerous than to tell children of bugbears and goblins. Fear will find every houſe haunted, and idleneſs will wait for ever for the moment of illumination.

This diſtinction of ſeaſons is produced only by imagination operating on luxury. To temperance every day is bright, and every hour is propitious to diligence. He that ſhall reſolutely excite his faculties, or exert his virtues, will ſoon make himſelf ſuperior to the ſeaſons, and may ſet at defiance the morning miſt, and the evening damp, the blaſts of the eaſt, and the clouds of the ſouth.

It was the boaſt of the *Stoick* philoſophy, to make man unſhaken by calamity, and unelated by ſucceſs, incorruptible by pleaſure, and invulnerable by pain; theſe are heights of wiſdom which none ever attained, and to which few can aſpire; but there are lower degrees of conſtancy neceſſary to common virtue, and every man, however he may diſtruſt himſelf in the extremes of good or evil, might at leaſt ſtruggle againſt the tyranny of the climate, and refuſe to enſlave his virtue or his reaſon to the moſt variable of all variations, the changes of the weather.

NUMB. 12. SATURDAY, *July* 1, 1758.

THAT every man is important in his own eyes, is a poſition of which we all either voluntarily or unwarily at leaſt once an hour confeſs the truth; and it will unavoidably follow, that every man believes himſelf important to the publick.

The right which this importance gives us to general notice and viſible diſtinction, is one of thoſe diſputable privileges which we have not always courage to aſſert; and which we therefore ſuffer to lie dormant till ſome elation of mind, or viciſſitude or fortune, incites us to declare our pretenſions and enforce our demands. And hopeleſs as the claim of vulgar characters may ſeem to the ſupercilious and ſevere, there are few who do not at one time or other endeavour to ſtep forward beyond their rank, who do not make ſome ſtruggles for fame, and ſhew that they think all other conveniences and delights imperfectly enjoyed without a name.

To get a name, can happen but to few. A name, even in the moſt commercial nation, is one of the few things which cannot be bought. It is the free gift of mankind, which muſt be deſerved before it will be granted, and is at laſt unwillingly beſtowed. But this unwillingneſs only encreaſes deſire in him who believes his merit ſufficient to overcome it.

There is a particular period of life, in which this fondneſs for a name ſeems principally to predominate *in both ſexes.* *Scarce* any couple comes together,

but

but the nuptials are declared in the newſpapers with encomiums on each party. Many an eye, ranging over the page with eager curioſity in queſt of ſtateſmen and heroes, is ſtopped by a marriage celebrated between Mr. *Buckram*, an eminent ſaleſman in *Thread-needle-ſtreet*, and Miſs *Dolly Juniper*, the only daughter of an eminent diſtiller, of the pariſh of *St. Giles's in the Fields*, a young lady adorned with every accompliſhment that can give happineſs to the married ſtate. Or we are told, amidſt our impatience for the event of a battle, that on a certain day Mr. *Winker*, a tide-waiter at *Yarmouth*, was married to Mrs. *Cackle*, a widow lady of great accompliſhments, and that as ſoon as the ceremony was performed they ſet out in a poſt-chaiſe for *Yarmouth*.

Many are the enquiries which ſuch intelligence muſt undoubtedly raiſe, but nothing in this world is laſting. When the reader has contemplated with envy, or with gladneſs, the felicity of Mr. *Buckram* and Mr. *Winker*, and ranſacked his memory for the names of *Juniper* and *Cackle*, his attention is diverted to other thoughts, by finding that *Mirza* will not cover this ſeaſon; or that a ſpaniel has been loſt or ſtolen, that anſwers to the name of *Ranger*.

Whence it ariſes that on the day of marriage all agree to call thus openly for honours, I am not able to diſcover. Some, perhaps, think it kind, by a publick declaration, to put an end to the hopes of rivalry and the fears of jealouſy, to let parents know that they may ſet their daughters at liberty whom they have locked up for fear of the bridegroom, or *to diſmiſs* to their counters and their offices the

amorous

amorous youths that had been uſed to hover round the dwelling of the bride.

Theſe connubial praiſes may have another cauſe. It may be the intention of the huſband and wife to dignify themſelves in the eyes of each other, and, according to their different tempers or expectations, to win affection, or enforce reſpect.

It was ſaid of the family of *Lucas*, that it was *noble*, for *all the brothers were valiant, and all the ſiſters were virtuous*. What would a ſtranger ſay of the *Engliſh* nation, in which on the day of marriage all the men are *eminent*, and all the women *beautiful*, *accompliſhed*, and *rich*?

How long the wife will be perſuaded of the eminence of her huſband, or the huſband continue to believe that his wife has the qualities required to make marriage happy, may reaſonably be queſtioned. I am afraid that much time ſeldom paſſes before each is convinced that praiſes are fallacious, and particularly thoſe praiſes which we confer upon ourſelves.

I ſhould therefore think, that this cuſtom might be omitted without any loſs to the community, and that the ſons and daughters of lanes and alleys might go hereafter to the next church, with no witneſſes of their worth or happineſs but their parents and their friends; but if they cannot be happy on the bridal day without ſome gratification of their vanity, I hope they will be willing to encourage a friend of mine who propoſes to devote his powers to their ſervice.

Mr. *Settle*, a man whoſe *eminence* was once allowed by the *eminent*, and whoſe *accompliſhments* were confeſſed by the *accompliſhed*, in the latter part of a long

life

life ſupported himſelf by an uncommon expedient. He had a ſtanding elegy and epithalamium, of which only the firſt and laſt were leaves varied occaſionally, and the intermediate pages were, by general terms, left applicable alike to every character. When any marriage became known, *Settle* ran to the bridegroom with his epithalamium; and when he heard of any death, ran to the heir with his elegy.

Who can think himſelf diſgraced by a trade that was practiſed ſo long by the rival of *Dryden*, by the poet whoſe *Empreſs of Morocco* was played before princes by ladies of the court?

My friend purpoſes to open an office in the *Fleet* for matrimonial panegyricks, and will accommodate all with praiſe who think their own powers of expreſſion inadequate to their merit. He will ſell any man or woman the virtue or qualification which is moſt faſhionable or moſt deſired; but deſires his cuſtomers to remember, that he ſets beauty at the higheſt price, and riches at the next, and if he be well paid, throws in virtue for nothing.

NUMB. 13. SATURDAY, *July* 8, 1758.

To the IDLER.

DEAR Mr. IDLER,

THOUGH few men of prudence are much inclined to interpoſe in diſputes between man and wife, who commonly make peace at the expence of the arbitrator; yet I will venture to lay before you a controverſy, by which the quiet of my houſe has been long diſturbed, and which, unleſs you can decide it, is likely to produce laſting evils, and embitter thoſe hours which nature ſeems to have appropriated to tenderneſs and repoſe.

I married a wife with no great fortune, but of a family remarkable for domeſtick prudence, and elegant frugality. I lived with her at eaſe, if not with happineſs, and ſeldom had any reaſon of complaint. The houſe was always clean, the ſervants were active and regular, dinner was on the table every day at the ſame minute, and the ladies of the neighbourhood were frightened when I invited their huſbands, leſt their own economy ſhould be leſs eſteemed.

During this gentle lapſe of life, my dear brought me three daughters. I wiſhed for a ſon to continue the family; but my wife often tells me, that boys are dirty things, and are always troubleſome in a houſe, and declares that ſhe has hated the ſight of them ever ſince ſhe ſaw lady *Fondle*'s eldeſt ſon ride over a carpet with his hobby-horſe all mire.

I did not much attend to her opinion, but knew that girls could not be made boys; and therefore compoſed myſelf to bear what I could not remedy, and reſolved to beſtow that care on my daughters, to which only the ſons are commonly thought entitled.

But my wife's notions of education differ widely from mine. She is an irreconcileable enemy to idleneſs, and conſiders every ſtate of life as idleneſs, in which the hands are not employed, or ſome art acquired, by which ſhe thinks money may be got or ſaved.

In purſuance of this principle, ſhe calls up her daughters at a certain hour, and appoints them a taſk of needle-work to be performed before breakfaſt. They are confined in a garret, which has its window in the roof, both becauſe work is beſt done at a ſky-light, and becauſe children are apt to loſe time by looking about them.

They bring down their work to breakfaſt, and as they deſerve are commended or reproved; they are then ſent up with a new taſk till dinner; if no company is expected, their mother ſits with them the whole afternoon, to direct their operations, and to draw patterns, and is ſometimes denied to her neareſt relations when ſhe is engaged in teaching them a new ſtitch.

By this continual exerciſe of their diligence, ſhe has obtained a very conſiderable number of laborious performances. We have twice as many fire-ſkreens as chimneys, and three flouriſhed quilts for every bed. Half the rooms are adorned with a kind of *futile pictures*, which imitate tapeſtry. But all their

work is not ſet out to ſhew; ſhe has boxes filled with knit garters and braided ſhoes. She has twenty covers for ſide-ſaddles embroidered with ſilver flowers, and has curtains wrought with gold in various figures, which ſhe reſolves ſome time or other to hang up. All theſe ſhe diſplays to her company whenever ſhe is elate with merit, and eager for praiſe; and amidſt the praiſes which her friends and herſelf beſtow upon her merit, ſhe never fails to turn to me, and aſk what all theſe would coſt, if I had been to buy them.

I ſometimes venture to tell her, that many of the ornaments are ſuperfluous; that what is done with ſo much labour might have been ſupplied by a very eaſy purchaſe; that the work is not always worth the materials; and that I know not why the children ſhould be perſecuted with uſeleſs taſks, or obliged to make ſhoes that are never worn. She anſwers with a look of contempt, that men never care how money goes, and proceeds to tell of a dozen new chairs for which ſhe is contriving covers, and of a couch which ſhe intends to ſtand as a monument of needle-work.

In the mean time the girls grow up in total ignorance of every thing paſt, preſent, and future. *Molly* aſked me the other day, whether *Ireland* was in *France*, and was ordered by her mother to mend her hem. *Kitty* knows not, at ſixteen, the difference between a proteſtant and a papiſt, becauſe ſhe has been employed three years in filling the ſide of a cloſet with a hanging that is to repreſent *Cranmer* in the flames. And *Dolly*, my eldeſt girl, is now unable to read a *chapter in the bible*, having ſpent all the time,

which other children paſs at ſchool, in working the interview between *Solomon* and the queen of *Sheba*.

About a month ago, *Tent* and *Turkey*-ſtitch ſeemed at a ſtand; my wife knew not what new work to introduce; I ventured to propoſe that the girls ſhould now learn to read and write, and mentioned the neceſſity of a little arithmetick; but, unhappily, my wife has diſcovered that linen wears out, and has bought the girls three little wheels, that they may ſpin hukkaback for the ſervants table. I remonſtrated, that with larger wheels they might diſpatch in an hour what muſt now coſt them a day; but ſhe told me, with irreſiſtible authority, that any buſineſs is better than idleneſs; that when theſe wheels are ſet upon a table, with mats under them, they will turn without noiſe, and keep the girls upright; that great wheels are not fit for gentlewomen; and that with theſe, ſmall as they are, ſhe does not doubt but that the three girls, if they are kept cloſe, will ſpin every year as much cloth as would coſt five pounds if one were to buy it.

NUMB. 14. SATURDAY, *July* 15, 1758.

WHEN *Diogenes* received a viſit in his tub from *Alexander the Great*, and was aſked, according to the ancient forms of royal courteſy, what petition he had to offer; *I have nothing*, ſaid he, *to aſk, but that you would remove to the other ſide, that you may not, by intercepting the ſunſhine, take from me what you cannot give me.*

Such was the demand of *Diogenes* from the greateſt monarch of the earth, which thoſe, who have leſs power than *Alexander*, may, with yet more propriety, apply to themſelves. He that does much good, may be allowed to do ſometimes a little harm. But if the opportunities of beneficence be denied by fortune, innocence ſhould at leaſt be vigilantly preſerved.

It is well known, that time once paſt never returns, and that the moment which is loſt, is loſt for ever. Time therefore ought, above all other kinds of property, to be free from invaſion; and yet there is no man who does not claim the power of waſting that time which is the right of others.

This uſurpation is ſo general, that a very ſmall part of the year is ſpent by choice; ſcarcely any thing is done when it is intended, or obtained when it is deſired. Life is continually ravaged by invaders; one ſteals away an hour, and another a day;

one conceals the robbery by hurrying us into b
neſs, another by lulling us with amuſement;
depredation is continued through a thouſand vic
tudes of tumult and tranquillity, till, having loſt
we can loſe no more.

This waſte of the lives of men has been
frequently charged upon the great, whoſe follov
linger from year to year in expectations, and di
laſt with petitions in their hands. Thoſe who r
envy will eaſily incur cenſure. I know not whe
ſtateſmen and patrons do not ſuffer more reproa
than they deſerve, and may not rather themſe
complain that they are given up a prey to pre
ſions without merit, and to importunity with
ſhame.

The truth is, that the inconveniences of atte
ance are more lamented than felt. To the gre
number ſolicitation is its own reward. To be
in good company, to talk of familiarities with
of power, to be able to tell the freſheſt news, to
tify an inferior circle with predictions of encreaſ
decline of favour, and to be regarded as a candi
for high offices, are compenſations more
equivalent to the delay of favours, which
haps he that begs them has hardly confidenc
expect.

A man conſpicuous in a high ſtation, who n
tiplies hopes that he may multiply dependants,
be conſidered as a beaſt of prey, juſtly dreaded,
eaſily avoided; his den is known, and they
would not be devoured, need not approach
The great danger of the waſte of time is f

caterpillars and moths, who are not reſiſted, becauſe they are not feared, and who work on with unheeded miſchiefs, and inviſible encroachments.

He, whoſe rank or merit procures him the notice of mankind, muſt give up himſelf, in a great meaſure, to the convenience or humour of thoſe who ſurround him. Every man, who is ſick of himſelf, will fly to him for relief; he that wants to ſpeak will require him to hear; and he that wants to hear will expect him to ſpeak. Hour paſſes after hour, the noon ſucceeds to morning, and the evening to noon, while a thouſand objects are forced upon his attention, which he rejects as faſt as they are offered, but which the cuſtom of the world requires to be received with appearance of regard.

If we will have the kindneſs of others, we muſt endure their follies. He, who cannot perſuade himſelf to withdraw from ſociety, muſt be content to pay a tribute of his time to a multitude of tyrants; to the loiterer, who makes appointments which he never keeps; to the conſulter, who aſks advice which he never takes; to the boaſter, who bluſters only to be praiſed; to the complainer, who whines only to be pitied; to the projector, whoſe happineſs is to entertain his friends with expectations which all but himſelf know to be vain; to the economiſt, who tells of bargains and ſettlements; to the politician, who predicts the fate of battles and breach of alliances; to the uſurer, who compares the different funds; and to the talker, who talks only becauſe he loves to be talking.

To put every man in poſſeſſion of his own time and reſcue the day from this ſucceſſion of uſurpers is beyond my power, and beyond my hope. Yet perhaps, ſome ſtop might be put to this unmerciful perſecution, if all would ſeriouſly reflect, that whoever pays a viſit that is not deſired, or talks longer than the hearer is willing to attend, is guilty of an injury which he cannot repair, and takes away that which he cannot give.

NUMB. 15. SATURDAY, *July* 22, 1758.

To the IDLER.

SIR,

I HAVE the misfortune to be a man of buſineſs; that, you will ſay, is a moſt grievous one: but what makes it the more ſo to me, is, that my wife has nothing to do: at leaſt ſhe had too good an education, and the proſpect of too good a fortune in reverſion when I married her, to think of employing herſelf either in my ſhop affairs, or the management of my family.

Her time, you know, as well as my own, muſt be filled up ſome way or other. For my part, I have enough to mind, in weighing my goods out, and waiting on my cuſtomers: but my wife, though ſhe could be of as much uſe as a ſhopman to me, if ſhe would put her hand to it, is now only in my way

way. She walks all the morning ſauntering about the ſhop with her arms through her pocket-holes, or ſtands gaping at the door-ſill, and looking at every perſon that paſſes by. She is continually aſking me a thouſand frivolous queſtions about every cuſtomer that comes in and goes out; and all the while that I am entering any thing in my day-book, ſhe is lolling over the counter, and ſtaring at it, as if I was only ſcribbling or drawing figures for her amuſement. Sometimes, indeed, ſhe will take a needle; but as ſhe always works at the door, or in the middle of the ſhop, ſhe has ſo many interruptions, that ſhe is longer hemming a towel, or darning a ſtocking, than I am in breaking forty loaves of ſugar, and making it up into pounds.

In the afternoon I am ſure likewiſe to have her company, except ſhe is called upon by ſome of her acquaintance: and then, as we let out all the upper part of our houſe, and have only a little room backwards for ourſelves, they either keep ſuch a chattering, or elſe are calling out every moment to me, that I cannot mind my buſineſs for them.

My wife, I am ſure, might do all the little matters our family requires; and I could wiſh that ſhe would employ herſelf in them; but, inſtead of that, we have a girl to do the work, and look after a little boy about two years old, which I may fairly ſay is the mother's own child. The brat muſt be humoured in every thing: he is therefore ſuffered conſtantly to play in the ſhop, pull all the goods about, and clamber up the ſhelves to get at the *plumbs and ſugar*. I dare not correct him; be-

cauſe,

cauſe, if I did, I ſhould have wife and maid b upon me at once. As to the latter, ſhe is as l and ſluttiſh as her miſtreſs; and becauſe ſhe co plains ſhe has too much work, we can ſcarce her to do any thing at all: nay, what is wo than that, I am afraid ſhe is hardly honeſt; a as ſhe is entruſted to buy in all our provifions, jade, I am ſure, makes a market-penny out of ev article.

But to return to my deary.—The evenings the only time, when it is fine weather, that I am to myſelf; for then ſhe generally takes the child to give it milk in the park. When ſhe comes ho again, ſhe is ſo fatigued with walking, that ſhe c not ſtir from her chair: and it is an hour, after ſh is ſhut, before I can get a bit of ſupper, while maid is taken up in undreſſing and putting the ch to bed.

But you will pity me much more, when I t you the manner in which we generally paſs our *S days*. In the morning ſhe is commonly too ill dreſs herſelf to go to church, ſhe therefore ne gets up till noon; and, what is ſtill more vexatio keeps *me* in bed with her, when I ought to be b ſily engaged in better employment. It is well if can get her things on by dinner-time; and wh that is over, I am ſure to be dragged out by l either to *Georgia*, or *Hornſey Wood*, or the *Wh Conduit Houſe*. Yet even theſe near excurſions very fatiguing to her, that, beſides what it co in tea and hot rolls, and ſyllabubs, and cal r the boy, I am frequently forced to take a hac -coach, or drive them out in a one-horſe-cha

At other times, as my wife is rather of the fatteſt, and a very poor walker, beſides bearing her whole weight upon my arm, I am obliged to carry the child myſelf.

Thus, Sir, does ſhe conſtantly drawl out her time, without either profit or ſatisfaction; and, while I ſee my neighbours wives helping in the ſhop, and almoſt earning as much as their huſbands, I have the mortification to find, that mine is nothing but a dead weight upon me. In ſhort, I do not know any greater misfortune can happen to a plain hard-working tradeſman, as I am, than to be joined to ſuch a woman, who is rather a clog than an help-mate to him.

I am, SIR,

Your humble ſervant,

ZACHARY TREACLE.

NUMB. 16. SATURDAY, *July* 29, 1758.

I PAID a viſit yeſterday to my old friend *Ned Drugget*, at his country-lodgings. *Ned* began trade with a very ſmall fortune; he took a ſmall houſe in an obſcure ſtreet, and for ſome years dealt only in remnants. Knowing that *light gains make a heavy purſe*, he was content with moderate profit; having obſerved or heard the effects of civility, he bowed down to the counter edge at the entrance and departure of every cuſtomer, liſtened without impatience to the objections of the ignorant, and refuſed without reſentment the offers of the penurious. His only recreation was to ſtand at his own door and look into the ſtreet. His dinner was ſent him from a neighbouring alehouſe, and he opened and ſhut the ſhop at a certain hour with his own hands.

His reputation ſoon extended from one end of the ſtreet to the other, and Mr. *Drugget*'s exemplary conduct was recommended by every maſter to his apprentice, and by every father to his ſon. *Ned* was not only conſidered as a thriving trader, but as a man of elegance and politeneſs, for he was remarkably neat in his dreſs, and would wear his coat threadbare without ſpotting it; his hat was always bruſhed, his ſhoes gloſſy, his wig nicely curled, and his ſtockings without a wrinkle. With ſuch qualifications it was not very difficult for him to gain the heart of Miſs *Comfit*, the only daughter of Mr. *Comfit* the confectioner.

Ned

Ned is one of thoſe whoſe happineſs marriage has encreaſed. His wife had the ſame diſpoſition with himſelf, and his method of life was very little changed; except that he diſmiſſed the lodgers from the firſt floor, and took the whole houſe into his own hands.

He had already, by his parſimony, accumulated a conſiderable ſum, to which the fortune of his wife was now added. From this time he began to graſp at greater acquiſitions, and was always ready, with money in his hand, to pick up the refuſe of a ſale, or to buy the ſtock of a trader who retired from buſineſs. He ſoon added his parlour to his ſhop, and was obliged, a few months afterwards, to hire a warehouſe.

He had now a ſhop ſplendidly and copiouſly furniſhed with every thing that time had injured, or faſhion had degraded; with fragments of tiſſues, odd yards of brocade, vaſt bales of faded ſilk, and innumerable boxes of antiquated ribbons. His ſhop was ſoon celebrated through all quarters of the town, and frequented by every form of oſtentatious poverty. Every maid, whoſe misfortune it was to be taller than her lady, matched her gown at Mr. *Drugget*'s; and many a maiden who had paſſed a winter with her aunt in *London*, dazzled the ruſticks, at her return, with cheap finery which *Drugget* had ſupplied. His ſhop was often viſited in a morning by ladies who left their coaches in the next ſtreet, and crept through the alley in linen gowns. *Drugget* knows the rank of his cuſtomers by their baſhfulneſs, and when he finds them unwilling to be ſeen, invites them up ſtairs, or retires with them to the back window.

I rejoiced

I rejoiced at the encreaſing proſperity of r friend, and imagined that as he grew rich, he w growing happy. His mind has partaken the e largement of his fortune. When I ſtepped in t the firſt five years, I was welcomed only with a ſha of the hand; in the next period of his life, he be koned acroſs the way for a pot of beer; but, for years paſt, he invites me to dinner; and, if he b ſpeaks me the day before, never fails to regale r with a fillet of veal.

His riches neither made him uncivil nor neg gent: he roſe at the ſame hour, attended with t ſame aſſiduity, and bowed with the ſame gentlene But for ſome years he has been much inclined talk of the fatigues of buſineſs, and the confin ment of a ſhop, and to wiſh that he had been happy as to have renewed his uncle's leaſe of farm, that he might have lived without noiſe a hurry, in a pure air, in the artleſs ſociety of hon villagers, and the contemplation of the works nature.

I ſoon diſcovered the cauſe of my friend's phil ſophy. He thought himſelf grown rich enough have a lodging in the country, like the mercers *Ludgate-hill*, and was reſolved to enjoy himſelf the decline of life. This was a revolution not be made ſuddenly. He talked three years of t pleaſures of the country, but paſſed every night ov his own ſhop. But at laſt he reſolved to be happ and hired a lodging in the country, that he may ſte ſome hours in the week from buſineſs; for, ſays h *when a man advances in life, he loves to entertain hi ſelf ſometimes with his own thoughts.*

I w

I was invited to this ſeat of quiet and contemplation among thoſe whom Mr. *Drugget* conſiders as his moſt reputable friends, and deſires to make the firſt witneſſes of his elevation to the higheſt dignities of a ſhopkeeper. I found him at *Iſlington*, in a room which overlooked the high road, amuſing himſelf with looking through the window, which the clouds of duſt would not ſuffer him to open. He embraced me, told me I was welcome into the country, and aſked me, if I did not feel myſelf refreſhed. He then deſired that dinner might be haſtened, for freſh air always ſharpened his appetite, and ordered me a toaſt and a glaſs of wine after my walk. He told me much of the pleaſure he found in retirement, and wondered what had kept him ſo long out of the country. After dinner, company came in, and Mr. *Drugget* again repeated the praiſes of the country, recommended the pleaſures of meditation, and told them, that he had been all the morning at the window, counting the carriages as they paſſed before him.

NUMB. 17. SATURDAY, *Auguſt* 5, 1758.

THE rainy weather, which has continued the laſt month, is ſaid to have given great diſturbance to the inſpectors of barometers. The oraculous glaſſes have deceived their votaries; ſhower has ſucceeded ſhower, though they predicted ſunſhine and dry ſkies; and by fatal confidence in theſe fallacious promiſes, many coats have loſt their gloſs, and many curls been moiſtened to flaccidity.

This is one of the diſtreſſes to which mortals ſubject themſelves by the pride of ſpeculation. I had no part in this learned diſappointment, who am content to credit my ſenſes, and to believe that rain will fall when the air blackens, and that the weather will be dry when the ſun is bright. My caution indeed does not always preſerve me from a ſhower. To be wet, may happen to the genuine *Idler*; but to be wet in oppoſition to theory, can befal only the *Idler* that pretends to be buſy. Of thoſe that ſpin out life in trifles, and die without a memorial, many flatter themſelves with high opinions of their own importance, and imagine that they are every day adding ſome improvement to human life. To be idle and to be poor, have always been reproaches, and therefore every man endeavours, with his utmoſt care, to hide his poverty from others, and his *idleneſs* from himſelf.

Among thoſe whom I never could perſuade to rank *themſelves* with *Idlers*, and who ſpeak with indigna-

tion of my morning ſleeps and nocturnal rambles; one paſſes the day in catching ſpiders, that he may count their eyes with a microſcope; another erects his head, and exhibits the duſt of a marigold ſeparated from the flower with a dexterity worthy of *Leeuwenboeck* himſelf. Some turn the wheel of electricity; ſome ſuſpend rings to a loadſtone, and find that what they did yeſterday, they can do again to-day. Some regiſter the changes of the wind, and die fully convinced that the wind is changeable.

There are men yet more profound, who have heard that two colourleſs liquors may produce a colour by union, and that two cold bodies will grow hot if they are mingled; they mingle them, and produce the effect expected, ſay it is ſtrange, and mingle them again.

The *Idlers* that ſport only with inanimate nature may claim ſome indulgence; if they are uſeleſs, they are ſtill innocent: but there are others, whom I know not how to mention without more emotion than my love of quiet willingly admits. Among the inferior profeſſors of medical knowledge, is a race of wretches, whoſe lives are only varied by varieties of cruelty; whoſe favourite amuſement is to nail dogs to tables and open them alive; to try how long life may be continued in various degrees of mutilation, or with the exciſion or laceration of the vital parts; to examine whether burning irons are felt more acutely by the bone or tendon; and whether the more laſting agonies are produced by poiſon forced into the mouth or injected into the veins.

It is not without reluctance that I offend the ſenſibility of the tender mind with images like theſe. If ſuch cruelties were not practiſed, it were to be deſired that they ſhould not be conceived; but ſince they are publiſhed every day with oſtentation, let me be allowed once to mention them, ſince I mention them with abhorrence.

Mead has invidiouſly remarked of *Woodward*, that he gathered ſhells and ſtones, and would paſs for a philoſopher. With pretenſions much leſs reaſonable, the anatomical novice tears out the living bowels of an animal, and ſtyles himſelf phyſician, prepares himſelf by familiar cruelty for that profeſſion which he is to exerciſe upon the tender and the helpleſs, upon feeble bodies and broken minds, and by which he has opportunities to extend his arts of torture, and continue thoſe experiments upon infancy and age, which he has hitherto tried upon cats and dogs.

What is alleged in defence of theſe hateful practices, every one knows; but the truth is, that by knives, fire, and poiſon, knowledge is not always ſought, and is very ſeldom attained. The experiments that have been tried, are tried again; he that burned an animal with irons yeſterday, will be willing to amuſe himſelf with burning another to-morrow. I know not, that by living diſſections any diſcovery has been made by which a ſingle malady is more eaſily cured. And if the knowledge of phyſiology has been ſomewhat encreaſed, he ſurely buys knowledge dear, who learns the uſe of the lacteals at the expence of his humanity. It is time that univerſal reſentment

reſentment ſhould ariſe againſt theſe horrid operations, which tend to harden the heart, extinguiſh thoſe ſenſations which give man confidence in man, and make the phyſician more dreadful than the gout or ſtone.

NUMB. 18. SATURDAY, *Auguſt* 12, 1758.

To the IDLER.

SIR,

IT commonly happens to him who endeavours to obtain diſtinction by ridicule, or cenſure, that he teaches others to practiſe his own arts againſt himſelf; and that, after a ſhort enjoyment of the applauſe paid to his ſagacity, or of the mirth excited by his wit, he is doomed to ſuffer the ſame ſeverities of ſcrutiny, to hear inquiry detecting his faults, and exaggeration ſporting with his failings.

The natural diſcontent of inferiority will ſeldom fail to operate in ſome degree of malice againſt him, who profeſſes to ſuperintend the conduct of others, eſpecially if he ſeats himſelf uncalled in the chair of judicature, and exerciſes authority by his own commiſſion.

You cannot, therefore, wonder that your obſervations on human folly, if they produce laughter at one time, awaken criticiſm at another; and that among the numbers whom you have taught to ſcoff

at the retirement of *Drugget*, there is one who offers his apology.

The miſtake of your old friend is by no means peculiar. The public pleaſures of far the greater part of mankind are counterfeit. Very few carry their philoſophy to places of diverſion, or are very careful to analyſe their enjoyments. The general condition of life is ſo full of miſery, that we are glad to catch delight without enquiring whence it comes, or by what power it is beſtowed.

The mind is ſeldom quickened to very vigorous operations but by pain, or the dread of pain. We do not diſturb ourſelves with the detection of fallacies which do us no harm, nor willingly decline a pleaſing effect to inveſtigate its cauſe. He that is happy, by whatever means, deſires nothing but the continuance of happineſs, and is no more ſolicitous to diſtribute his ſenſations into their proper ſpecies, than the common gazer on the beauties of the ſpring to ſeparate light into its original rays.

Pleaſure is therefore ſeldom ſuch as it appears to others, nor often ſuch as we repreſent it to ourſelves. Of the ladies that ſparkle at a muſical performance, a very ſmall number has any quick ſenſibility of harmonious ſounds. But every one that goes has her pleaſure. She has the pleaſure of wearing fine clothes, and of ſhewing them, of outſhining thoſe whom ſhe ſuſpects to envy her; ſhe has the pleaſure of appearing among other ladies in a place whither the race of meaner mortals ſeldom intrudes, and of reflecting that, in the converſations of the next morning, her name will be mentioned among thoſe that

ſat in the firſt row; ſhe has the pleaſure of returning courteſies, or refuſing to return them, of receiving compliments with civility, or rejecting them with diſdain. She has the pleaſure of meeting ſome of her acquaintance, of gueſſing why the reſt are abſent, and of telling them that ſhe ſaw the opera, on pretence of inquiring why they would miſs it. She has the pleaſure of being ſuppoſed to be pleaſed with a refined amuſement, and of hoping to be numbered among the votreſſes of harmony. She has the pleaſure of eſcaping for two hours the ſuperiority of a ſiſter, or the controul of a huſband; and from all theſe pleaſures ſhe concludes, that heavenly muſick is the balm of life.

All aſſemblies of gaiety are brought together by motives of the ſame kind. The theatre is not filled with thoſe that know or regard the ſkill of the actor, nor the ball-room by thoſe who dance, or attend to the dancers. To all places of general reſort, where the ſtandard of pleaſure is erected, we run with equal eagerneſs, or appearance of eagerneſs, for very different reaſons. One goes that he may ſay he has been there, another becauſe he never miſſes. This man goes to try what he can find, and that to diſcover what others find. Whatever diverſion is coſtly will be frequented by thoſe who deſire to be thought rich; and whatever has, by any accident, become faſhionable, eaſily continues its reputation, becauſe every one is aſhamed of not partaking it.

To every place of entertainment we go with expectation, and deſire of being pleaſed; we meet others who are brought by the ſame motives; no *one will be the firſt* to own the diſappointment; one

face reflects the ſmile of another, till each believes the reſt delighted, and endeavours to catch and tranſmit the circulating rapture. In time, all are deceived by the cheat to which all contribute. The fiction of happineſs is propagated by every tongue, and confirmed by every look, till at laſt all profeſs the joy which they do not feel, conſent to yield to the general deluſion; and when the voluntary dream is at an end, lament that bliſs is of ſo ſhort a duration.

If *Drugget* pretended to pleaſures of which he had no perception, or boaſted of one amuſement where he was indulging another, what did he which is not done by all thoſe who read his ſtory; of whom ſome pretend delight in converſation, only becauſe they dare not be alone; ſome praiſe the quiet of ſolitude, becauſe they are envious of ſenſe and impatient of folly; and ſome gratify their pride, by writing characters which expoſe the vanity of life.

I am, SIR,

Your humble Servant.

NUMB. 19. SATURDAY, *Auguſt* 19, 1758.

SOME of thoſe ancient ſages that have exerciſed their abilities in the enquiry after the *ſupreme good*, have been of opinion, that the higheſt degree of earthly happineſs is quiet; a calm repoſe both of mind and body, undiſturbed by the ſight of folly or the noiſe of buſineſs, the tumults of publick commotion, or the agitations of private intereſt; a ſtate in which the mind has no other employment, but to obſerve and regulate her own motions, to trace thought from thought, combine one image with another, raiſe ſyſtems of ſcience, and form theories of virtue.

To the ſcheme of theſe ſolitary ſpeculatiſts it has been juſtly objected, that if they are happy, they are happy only by being uſeleſs. That mankind is one vaſt republick, where every individual receives many benefits from the labour of others, which, by labouring in his turn for others, he is obliged to repay; and that where the united efforts of all are not able to exempt all from miſery, none have a right to withdraw from their taſk of vigilance, or to be indulged in idle wiſdom or ſolitary pleaſures.

It is common for controvertiſts, in the heat of diſputation, to add one poſition to another till they reach the extremities of knowledge, where truth and falſehood loſe their diſtinction. Their admirers follow them to the brink of abſurdity, and then ſtart back from each ſide towards the middle point. So

it has happened in this great diſquiſition. Many perceive alike the force of the contrary arguments, find quiet ſhameful, and buſineſs dangerous, and therefore paſs their lives between them, in buſtle without buſineſs and negligence without quiet.

Among the principal names of this moderate ſet is that great philoſopher *Jack Whirler*, whoſe buſineſs keeps him in perpetual motion, and whoſe motion always eludes his buſineſs; who is always to do what he never does, who cannot ſtand ſtill becauſe he is wanted in another place, and who is wanted in many places becauſe he ſtays in none.

Jack has more buſineſs than he can conveniently tranſact in one houſe; he has therefore one habitation near *Bow Church*, and another about a mile diſtant. By this ingenious diſtribution of himſelf between two houſes, *Jack* has contrived to be found at neither. *Jack*'s trade is extenſive, and he has many dealers; his converſation is ſprightly, and he has many companions; his diſpoſition is kind, and he has many friends. *Jack* neither forbears pleaſure for buſineſs, nor omits buſineſs for pleaſure, but is equally inviſible to his friends and his cuſtomers; to him that comes with an invitation to a club, and to him that waits to ſettle an account.

When you call at his houſe, his clerk tells you, that Mr. *Whirler* was juſt ſtept out, but will be at home exactly at two; you wait at a coffee-houſe till two, and then find that he has been at home, and is gone out again, but left word that he ſhould be at the *Half-moon* tavern at ſeven, where he hopes to meet you. At ſeven you go to the tavern. At eight in comes Mr. *Whirler* to tell you, that he is glad to ſee you, and only

only begs leave to run for a few minutes, to a gentleman that lives near the *Exchange*, from whom he will return before ſupper can be ready. Away he runs to the *Exchange*, to tell thoſe who are waiting for him, that he muſt beg them to defer the buſineſs till to-morrow, becauſe his time is come at the *Half-moon*.

Jack's cheerfulneſs and civility rank him among thoſe whoſe preſence never gives pain, and whom all receive with fondneſs and careſſes. He calls often on his friends, to tell them, that he will come again to-morrow; on the morrow he comes again to tell them how an unexpected ſummons hurries him away. When he enters a houſe, his firſt declaration is, that he cannot ſit down; and ſo ſhort are his viſits, that he ſeldom appears to have come for any other reaſon but to ſay, He muſt go.

The dogs of *Egypt*, when thirſt brings them to the *Nile*, are ſaid to run as they drink for fear of the crocodiles. *Jack Whirler* always dines at full ſpeed. He enters, finds the family at table, ſits familiarly down, and fills his plate; but while the firſt morſel is in his mouth, hears the clock ſtrike, and riſes; then goes to another houſe, ſits down again, recollects another engagement; has only time to taſte the ſoup, makes a ſhort excuſe to the company, and continues through another ſtreet his deſultory dinner.

But overwhelmed as he is with buſineſs, his chief deſire is to have ſtill more. Every new propoſal takes poſſeſſion of his thoughts; he ſoon balances probabilities, engages in the project, brings it almoſt to completion, and then forſakes it for another, which he catches with ſome alacrity, urges with the

ſame

ſame vehemence, and abandons with the ſame coldneſs.

Every man may be obſerved to have a certain ſtrain of lamentation, ſome peculiar theme of complaint on which he dwells in his moments of dejection. *Jack*'s topick of ſorrow, is the want of time. Many an excellent deſign languiſhes in empty theory for want of time. For the omiſſion of any civilities, want of time is his plea to others; for the neglect of any affairs, want of time is his excuſe to himſelf. That he wants time, he ſincerely believes; for he once pined away many months with a lingering diſtemper, for want of time to attend his health.

Thus *Jack Whirler* lives in perpetual fatigue without proportionate advantage, becauſe he does not conſider that no man can ſee all with his own eyes, or do all with his own hands; that whoever is engaged in multiplicity of buſineſs, muſt tranſact much by ſubſtitution, and leave ſomething to hazard; and that he who attempts to do all, will waſte his life in doing little.

NUMB. 20. SATURDAY, *Auguſt* 26, 1758.

THERE is no crime more infamous than the violation of truth. It is apparent that men can be ſocial beings no longer than they believe each other. When ſpeech is employed only as the vehicle of falſehood, every man muſt diſunite himſelf from others, inhabit his own cave, and ſeek prey only for himſelf.

Yet the law of truth, thus ſacred and neceſſary, is broken without puniſhment, without cenſure, in compliance with inveterate prejudice and prevailing paſſions. Men are willing to credit what they wiſh, and encourage rather thoſe who gratify them with pleaſure, than thoſe that inſtruct them with fidelity.

For this reaſon every hiſtorian diſcovers his country, and it is impoſſible to read the different accounts of any great event, without a wiſh that truth had more power over partiality.

Amidſt the joy of my countrymen for the acquiſition of *Louiſbourg*, I could not forbear to conſider how differently this revolution of *American* power is not only now mentioned by the contending nations, but will be repreſented by the writers of another century.

The *Engliſh* hiſtorian will imagine himſelf barely doing juſtice to *Engliſh* virtue, when he relates

the capture of *Louiſbourg* in the following manner:

" The *Engliſh* had hitherto ſeen, with great in-
" dignation, their attempts baffled and their force
" defied by an enemy, whom they conſidered them-
" ſelves as intitled to conquer by the right of pre-
" ſcription, and whom many ages of hereditary
" ſuperiority had taught them to deſpiſe. Their
" fleets were more numerous, and their ſeamen
" braver than thoſe of *France*, yet they only floated
" uſeleſs on the ocean, and the *French* derided them
" from their ports. Misfortunes, as is uſual, pro-
" duced diſcontent, the people murmured at the
" miniſters, and the miniſters cenſured the com-
" manders.

" In the ſummer of this year, the *Engliſh* began
" to find their ſucceſs anſwerable to their cauſe.
" A fleet and an army were ſent to *America* to
" diſlodge the enemies from the ſettlements which
" they had ſo perfidiouſly made, and ſo inſolently
" maintained, and to repreſs that power which was
" growing more every day by the aſſociation of the
" *Indians*, with whom theſe degenerate *Europeans*
" intermarried, and whom they ſecured to their
" party by preſents and promiſes.

" In the beginning of *June* the ſhips of war and
" veſſels containing the land forces appeared before
" *Louiſbourg*, a place ſo ſecure by nature that art
" was almoſt ſuperfluous, and yet fortified by art
" as if nature had left it open. The *French* boaſted
" that it was impregnable, and ſpoke with ſcorn
" of all attempts that could be made againſt it.

" The

" The garriſon was numerous, the ſtores equal to " the longeſt ſiege, and their engineers and com- " manders high in reputation. The mouth of the " harbour was ſo narrow, that three ſhips within " might eaſily defend it againſt all attacks from " the ſea. The *French* had, with that caution " which cowards borrow from fear and attribute to " policy, eluded our fleets, and ſent into that " port five great ſhips and ſix ſmaller, of which " they ſunk four in the mouth of the paſſage, " having raiſed batteries, and poſted troops, at all " the places where they thought it poſſible to make " a deſcent. The *Engliſh*, however, had more to " dread from the roughneſs of the ſea, than from " the ſkill or bravery of the defendants. Some " days paſſed before the ſurges, which riſe very " high round that iſland, would ſuffer them to " land. At laſt their impatience could be re- " ſtrained no longer; they got poſſeſſion of the " ſhore with little loſs by the ſea, and with leſs by " the enemy. In a few days the artillery was land- " ed, the batteries were raiſed, and the *French* had " no other hope than to eſcape from one poſt to an- " other. A ſhot from the batteries fired the " powder in one of their largeſt ſhips, the flame " ſpread to the two next, and all three were de- " ſtroyed; the *Engliſh* admiral ſent his boats againſt " the two large ſhips yet remaining, took them " without reſiſtance, and terrified the garriſon to an " immediate capitulation."

Let us now oppoſe to this *Engliſh* narrative the relation which will be produced, about the ſame time, by the writer of the age of *Louis* XV.

" About

" About this time the *Engliſh* admitted to the " conduct of affairs, a man who undertook to ſave " from deſtruction that ferocious and turbulent " people, who, from the mean inſolence of wealthy " traders, and the lawleſs confidence of ſucceſsful " robbers, were now ſunk in deſpair and ſtupified " with horror. He called in the ſhips which had " been diſperſed over the ocean to guard their mer- " chants, and ſent a fleet and an army, in which " almoſt the whole ſtrength of *England* was com- " priſed, to ſecure their poſſeſſions in *America*, " which were endangered alike by the *French* arms " and the *French* virtue. We had taken the *Engliſh* " fortreſſes by force, and gained the *Indian* nations " by humanity. The *Engliſh*, wherever they come, " are ſure to have the natives for their enemies; for " the only motive of their ſettlements is avarice, " and the only conſequence of their ſucceſs is op- " preſſion. In this war they acted like other bar- " barians, and, with a degree of outrageous " cruelty, which the gentleneſs of our manners " ſcarce ſuffers us to conceive, offered rewards " by open proclamation to thoſe who ſhould bring " in the ſcalps of *Indian* women and children. A " trader always makes war with the cruelty of a " pirate.

" They had long looked with envy and with ter- " ror upon the influence which the *French* exerted " over all the northern regions of *America* by the " poſſeſſion of *Louiſbourg*, a place naturally ſtrong, " and new fortified with ſome ſlight outworks. " They hoped to ſurprize the garriſon unprovided; " but that ſluggiſhneſs which always defeats their

" malice,

" malice, gave us time to ſend ſupplies, and to " ſtation ſhips for the defence of the harbour. " They came before *Louiſbourg* in *June*, and were " for ſome time in doubt whether they ſhould land. " But the commanders, who had lately ſeen an ad- " miral beheaded for not having done what he had " not power to do, durſt not leave the place unaſ- " ſaulted. An *Engliſhman* has no ardour for ho- " nour, nor zeal for duty; he neither values glory " nor loves his king; but balances one danger with " another, and will fight rather than be hanged. " They therefore landed, but with great loſs; their " engineers had, in the laſt war with the *French*, " learned ſomething of the military ſciences, and " made their approaches with ſufficient ſkill; but " all their efforts had been without effect, had not a " ball unfortunately fallen into the powder of one of " our ſhips, which communicated the fire to the reſt, " and, by opening the paſſage of the harbour, " obliged the garriſon to capitulate. Thus was " *Louiſbourg* loſt, and our troops marched out with " the admiration of their enemies, who durſt hardly " think themſelves maſters of the place."

NUMB. 21. SATURDAY, *September* 2, 1758.

To the IDLER.

DEAR Mr. IDLER,

THERE is a ſpecies of miſery or of diſeaſe, for which our language is commonly ſuppoſed to be without a name, but which I think is emphatically enough denominated *liſtleſſneſs*, and which is commonly termed a want of ſomething to do.

Of the unhappineſs of this ſtate I do not expect all your readers to have an adequate idea. Many are overburthened with buſineſs, and can imagine no comfort but in reſt; many have minds ſo placid, as willingly to indulge a voluntary lethargy; or ſo narrow, as eaſily to be filled to their utmoſt capacity. By theſe I ſhall not be underſtood, and therefore cannot be pitied. Thoſe only will ſympathize with my complaint, whoſe imagination is active and reſolution weak, whoſe deſires are ardent, and whoſe choice is delicate; who cannot ſatisfy themſelves with ſtanding ſtill, and yet cannot find a motive to direct their courſe.

I was the ſecond ſon of a gentleman, whoſe eſtate was barely ſufficient to ſupport himſelf and his heir in the dignity of killing game. He therefore made uſe of the intereſt which the alliances of his family afforded him, to procure me a poſt in the army. I paſſed ſome years in the moſt contemptible of all human

human ſtations, that of a ſoldier in time of peace. I wandered with the regiment as the quarters were changed, without opportunity for buſineſs, taſte for knowledge, or money for pleaſure. Wherever I came, I was for ſome time a ſtranger without curioſity, and afterwards an acquaintance without friendſhip. Having nothing to hope in theſe places of fortuitous reſidence, I reſigned my conduct to chance; I had no intention to offend, I had no ambition to delight.

I ſuppoſe every man is ſhocked when he hears how frequently ſoldiers are wiſhing for war. The wiſh is not always ſincere; the greater part are content with ſleep and lace, and counterfeit an ardour which they do not feel; but thoſe who deſire it moſt, are neither prompted by malevolence nor patriotiſm; they neither pant for laurels, nor delight in blood; but long to be delivered from the tyranny of idleneſs, and reſtored to the dignity of active beings.

I never imagined myſelf to have more courage than other men, yet was often involuntarily wiſhing for a war, but of a war at that time I had no proſpect; and being enabled, by the death of an uncle, to live without my pay, I quitted the army, and reſolved to regulate my own motions.

I was pleaſed, for a while, with the novelty of independance, and imagined that I had now found what every man deſires. My time was in my own power, and my habitation was wherever my choice ſhould fix it. I amuſed myſelf for two years, in paſſing from place to place, and comparing one convenience with another; but being at laſt aſhamed of enquiry,

and weary of uncertainty, I purchaſed a houſe, and eſtabliſhed my family.

I now expected to begin to be happy, and was happy for a ſhort time with that expectation. But I ſoon perceived my ſpirits to ſubſide, and my imagination to grow dark. The gloom thickened every day round me. I wondered by what malignant power my peace was blaſted, till I diſcovered at laſt that I had nothing to do.

Time, with all its celerity, moves ſlowly to him, whoſe whole employment is to watch its flight. I am forced upon a thouſand ſhifts to enable me to endure the tediouſneſs of the day. I riſe when I can ſleep no longer, and take my morning walk; I ſee what I have ſeen before, and return. I ſit down, and perſuade myſelf that I ſit down to think, find it impoſſible to think without a ſubject, riſe up to enquire after news, and endeavour to kindle in myſelf an artificial impatience for intelligence of events, which will never extend any conſequence to me, but that a few minutes they abſtract me from myſelf.

When I have heard any thing that may gratify curioſity, I am buſied, for a while, in running to relate it. I haſten from one place of concourſe to another, delighted with my own importance, and proud to think that I am doing ſomething, though I know that another hour would ſpare my labour.

I had once a round of viſits, which I paid very regularly, but I have now tired moſt of my friends. When I have ſat down I forget to riſe, and have more than once overheard one aſking another when I would be gone. I perceive the company tired, I obſerve

obſerve the miſtreſs of the family whiſpering to her ſervants, I find orders given to put off buſineſs till to-morrow, I ſee the watches frequently inſpected, and yet cannot withdraw to the vacuity of ſolitude, or venture myſelf in my own company.

Thus burthenſome to myſelf and others, I form many ſchemes of employment which may make my life uſeful or agreeable, and exempt me from the ignominy of living by ſufferance. This new courſe I have long deſigned, but have not yet begun. The preſent moment is never proper for the change, but there is always a time in view when all obſtacles will be removed, and I ſhall ſurprize all that know me with a new diſtribution of my time. Twenty years have paſt ſince I have reſolved a complete amendment, and twenty years have been loſt in delays. Age is coming upon me; and I ſhould look back with rage and deſpair upon the waſte of life, but that I am now beginning in earneſt to begin a reformation.

I am, SIR,

Your humble ſervant,

DICK LINGER.

NUMB. 22. SATURDAY, *September* 16, 1758.

To the IDLER.

SIR,

AS I was paſſing lately under one of the gates of this city, I was ſtruck with horror by a rueful cry, which ſummoned me *to remember the poor debtors.*

The wiſdom and juſtice of the *Engliſh* laws are, by *Engliſhmen* at leaſt, loudly celebrated; but ſcarcely the moſt zealous admirers of our inſtitutions can think that law wiſe, which, when men are capable of work, obliges them to beg; or juſt, which expoſes the liberty of one to the paſſions of another.

The proſperity of a people is proportionate to the number of hands and minds uſefully employed. To the community, ſedition is a fever, corruption is a gangrene, and idleneſs an atrophy. Whatever body, and whatever ſociety, waſtes more than it acquires, muſt gradually decay; and every being that continues to be fed, and ceaſes to labour, takes away ſomething from the publick ſtock.

The confinement, therefore, of any man in the ſloth and darkneſs of a priſon, is a loſs to the nation, and no gain to the creditor. For of the multitudes who are pining in thoſe cells of miſery, a very ſmall part is ſuſpected of any fraudulent act by which they retain what belongs to others. The reſt are impriſoned by the wantonneſs of pride, the malignity of revenge, or the acrimony of diſappointed expectation.

If thoſe, who thus rigorouſly exerciſe the power which the law has put into their hands, be aſked, why they continue to impriſon thoſe whom they know to be unable to pay them; one will anſwer, that his debtor once lived better than himſelf; another, that his wife looked above her neighbours, and his children went in ſilk clothes to the dancing-ſchool; and another, that he pretended to be a joker and a wit. Some will reply, that if they were in debt, they ſhould meet with the ſame treatment; ſome, that they owe no more than they can pay, and need therefore give no account of their actions. Some will confeſs their reſolution, that their debtors ſhall rot in jail; and ſome will diſcover, that they hope, by cruelty, to wring the payment from their friends.

The end of all civil regulations is to ſecure private happineſs from private malignity; to keep individuals from the power of one another; but this end is apparently neglected, when a man, irritated with loſs, is allowed to be the judge of his own cauſe, and to aſſign the puniſhment of his own pain; when the diſtinction between guilt and happineſs, between caſualty and deſign, is entruſted to eyes blind with intereſt, to underſtandings depraved by reſentment.

Since poverty is puniſhed among us as a crime, it ought at leaſt to be treated with the ſame lenity as other crimes; the offender ought not to languiſh at the will of him whom he has offended, but to be allowed ſome appeal to the juſtice of his country. There can be no reaſon why any debtor ſhould be impriſoned, but that he may be compelled to payment; and a term ſhould therefore be fixed, in

which the creditor ſhould exhibit his accuſation of concealed property. If ſuch property can be diſcovered, let it be given to the creditor; if the charge is not offered, or cannot be proved, let the priſoner be diſmiſſed.

Thoſe who made the laws have apparently ſuppoſed, that every deficiency of payment is the crime of the debtor. But the truth is, that the creditor always ſhares the act, and often more than ſhares the guilt of improper truſt. It ſeldom happens that a man impriſons another but for debts which he ſuffered to be contracted in hope of advantage to himſelf, and for bargains in which he proportioned his profit to his own opinion of the hazard; and there is no reaſon, why one ſhould puniſh the other for a contract in which both concurred.

Many of the inhabitants of priſons may juſtly complain of harder treatment. He that once owes more than he can pay, is often obliged to bribe his creditor to patience, by encreaſing his debt. Worſe and worſe commodities, at a higher and higher price, are forced upon him; he is impoveriſhed by compulſive traffick, and at laſt overwhelmed, in the common receptacles of miſery, by debts, which, without his own conſent, were accumulated on his head. To the relief of this diſtreſs, no other objection can be made but that by an eaſy diſſolution of debts, fraud will be left without puniſhment, and imprudence without awe, and that when inſolvency ſhall be no longer puniſhable, credit will ceaſe.

The motive to credit, is the hope of advantage. Commerce can never be at a ſtop, while one man wants what another can ſupply; and credit will

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ver be denied, while it is likely to be repaid with ofit. He that truſts one whom he deſigns to ſue, criminal by the act of truſt; the ceſſation of ſuch idious traffick is to be deſired, and no reaſon can given why a change of the law ſhould impair any er.

We ſee nation trade with nation, where no payent can be compelled. Mutual convenience proces mutual confidence; and the merchants conue to ſatisfy the demands of each other, though ey have nothing to dread but the loſs of trade.

It is vain to continue an inſtitution, which expeence ſhews to be ineffectual. We have now impriſoned one generation of debtors after another, but we do not find that their numbers leſſen. We have now learned, that raſhneſs and imprudence will not be deterred from taking credit; let us try whether fraud and avarice may be more eaſily reſtrained from giving it.

I am, SIR, &c.

NUMB. 23. SATURDAY, *September* 23, 1758.

LIFE has no pleaſure higher or nobler than that of friendſhip. It is painful to conſider, that this ſublime enjoyment may be impaired or deſtroyed by innumerable cauſes, and that there is no human poſſeſſion of which the duration is leſs certain.

Many have talked, in very exalted language, of the perpetuity of friendſhip, of invincible conſtancy, and unalienable kindneſs; and ſome examples have been ſeen of men who have continued faithful to their earlieſt choice, and whoſe affection has predominated over changes of fortune, and contrariety of opinion.

But theſe inſtances are memorable, becauſe they are rare. The friendſhip which is to be practiſed or expected by common mortals, muſt take its riſe from mutual pleaſure, and muſt end when the power ceaſes of delighting each other.

Many accidents therefore may happen, by which the ardour of kindneſs will be abated, without criminal baſeneſs or contemptible inconſtancy on either part. To give pleaſure is not always in our power; and little does he know himſelf, who believes that he can be always able to receive it.

Thoſe who would gladly paſs their days together may be ſeparated by the different courſe of their affairs;

affairs; and friendſhip, like love, is deſtroyed by long abſence, though it may be encreaſed by ſhort intermiſſions. What we have miſſed long enough to want it, we value more when it is regained; but that which has been loſt till it is forgotten, will be found at laſt with little gladneſs, and with ſtill leſs if a ſubſtitute has ſupplied the place. A man deprived of the companion to whom he uſed to open his boſom, and with whom he ſhared the hours of leiſure and merriment, feels the day at firſt hanging heavy on him; his difficulties oppreſs, and his doubts diſtract him; he ſees time come and go without his wonted gratification, and all is ſadneſs within and ſolitude about him. But this uneaſineſs never laſts long; neceſſity produces expedients, new amuſements are diſcovered, and new converſation is admitted.

No expectation is more frequently diſappointed, than that which naturally ariſes in the mind, from the proſpect of meeting an old friend after long ſeparation. We expect the attraction to be revived, and the coalition to be renewed; no man conſiders how much alteration time has made in himſelf, and very few enquire what effect it has had upon others. The firſt hour convinces them, that the pleaſure, which they have formerly enjoyed, is for ever at an end; different ſcenes have made different impreſſions; the opinions of both are changed; and that ſimilitude of manners and ſentiment is loſt, which confirmed them both in the approbation of themſelves.

Friendſhip is often deſtroyed by oppoſition of intereſt, not only by the ponderous and viſible inte-

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reſt which the deſire of wealth and greatneſs forms and maintains, but by a thouſand ſecret and ſlight competitions, ſcarcely known to the mind upon which they operate. There is ſcarcely any man without ſome favourite trifle which he values above greater attainments, ſome deſire of petty praiſe which he cannot patiently ſuffer to be fruſtrated. This minute ambition is ſometimes croſſed before it is known, and ſometimes defeated by wanton petulance; but ſuch attacks are ſeldom made without the loſs of friendſhip; for whoever has once found the vulnerable part will always be feared, and the reſentment will burn on in ſecret of which ſhame hinders the diſcovery.

This, however, is a ſlow malignity, which a wiſe man will obviate as inconſiſtent with quiet, and a good man will repreſs as contrary to virtue; but human happineſs is ſometimes violated by ſome more ſudden ſtrokes.

A diſpute begun in jeſt, upon a ſubject which a moment before was on both parts regarded with careleſs indifference, is continued by the deſire of conqueſt, till vanity kindles into rage, and oppoſition rankles into enmity. Againſt this haſty miſchief, I know not what ſecurity can be obtained: men will be ſometimes ſurprized into quarrels; and though they might both haſten to reconciliation, as ſoon as their tumult had ſubſided, yet two minds will ſeldom be found together, which can at once ſubdue their diſcontent, or immediately enjoy the ſweets of peace, without remembering the wounds of the conflict.

Friendſhip has other enemies. Suſpicion is always hardening the cautious, and diſguſt repelling the delicate. Very ſlender differences will ſometimes part thoſe whom long reciprocation of civility or beneficence has united. *Lonelove* and *Ranger* retired into the country to enjoy the company of each other, and returned in ſix weeks cold and petulant; *Ranger*'s pleaſure was to walk in the fields, and *Lonelove*'s to ſit in a bower; each had complied with the other in his turn, and each was angry that compliance had been exacted.

The moſt fatal diſeaſe of friendſhip is gradual decay, or diſlike hourly encreaſed by cauſes too ſlender for complaint, and too numerous for removal. Thoſe who are angry may be reconciled; thoſe who have been injured may receive a recompence; but when the deſire of pleaſing and willingneſs to be pleaſed is ſilently diminiſhed, the renovation of friendſhip is hopeleſs; as, when the vital powers ſink into languor, there is no longer any uſe of the phyſician.

NUMB. 24. SATURDAY, *September* 30, 1758.

WHEN man ſees one of the inferior creatures perched upon a tree, or baſking in the ſunſhine, without any apparent endeavour or purſuit, he often aſks himſelf, or his companion, *On what that animal can be ſuppoſed to be thinking?*

Of this queſtion, ſince neither bird nor beaſt can anſwer it, we muſt be content to live without the reſolution. We know not how much the brutes recollect of the paſt, or anticipate of the future; what power they have of comparing and preferring; or whether their faculties may not reſt in motionleſs indifference, till they are moved by the preſence of their proper object, or ſtimulated to act by corporal ſenſations.

I am the leſs inclined to theſe ſuperfluous inquiries, becauſe I have always been able to find ſufficient matter for curioſity in my own ſpecies. It is uſeleſs to go far in queſt of that which may be found at home; a very narrow circle of obſervation will ſupply a ſufficient number of men and women, who might be aſked with equal propriety, *On what they can be thinking?*

It is reaſonable to believe, that thought, like every thing elſe, has its cauſes and effects; that it muſt proceed from ſomething known, done, or ſuffered; and muſt produce ſome action or event. Yet how great is the number of thoſe in whoſe minds no ſource of thought has ever been opened,

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in whoſe life no conſequence of thought is ever diſcovered; who have learned nothing upon which they can reflect; who have neither ſeen nor felt any thing which could leave its traces on the memory; who neither foreſee nor deſire any change of their condition, and have therefore neither fear, hope, nor deſign, and yet are ſuppoſed to be thinking beings.

To every act a ſubject is required. He that thinks, muſt think upon ſomething. But tell me, ye that pierce deepeſt into nature, ye that take the wideſt ſurveys of life, inform me, kind ſhades of *Malbranche* and of *Locke*, what that ſomething can be, which excites and continues thought in maiden aunts with ſmall fortunes; in younger brothers that live upon annuities; in traders retired from buſineſs; in ſoldiers abſent from their regiments; or in widows that have no children?

Life is commonly conſidered as either active or contemplative; but ſurely this diviſion, how long ſoever it has been received, is inadequate and fallacious. There are mortals whoſe life is certainly not active, for they do neither good nor evil; and whoſe life cannot be properly called contemplative, for they never attend either to the conduct of men, or the works of nature, but riſe in the morning, look round them till night in careleſs ſtupidity, go to bed and ſleep, and riſe again in the morning.

It has been lately a celebrated queſtion in the ſchools of philoſophy, *Whether the ſoul always thinks?* Some have defined the ſoul to be the *power of thinking*; concluded that its eſſence conſiſts in act; that if it ſhould ceaſe to act, it would ceaſe

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to be; and that ceſſation of thought is but another name for extinction of mind. This argument is ſubtle, but not concluſive; becauſe it ſuppoſes what cannot be proved, that the nature of mind is properly defined. Others affect to diſdain ſubtilty, when ſubtilty will not ſerve their purpoſe, and appeal to daily experience. We ſpend many hours, they ſay, in ſleep, without the leaſt remembrance of any thoughts which then paſſed in our minds; and ſince we can only by our own conſciouſneſs be ſure that we think, why ſhould we imagine that we have had thought of which no conſciouſneſs remains?

This argument, which appeals to experience, may from experience be confuted. We every day do ſomething which we forget when it is done, and know to have been done only by conſequence. The waking hours are not denied to have been paſſed in thought; yet he that ſhall endeavour to recollect on one day the ideas of the former, will only turn the eye of reflection upon vacancy; he will find, that the greater part is irrevocably vaniſhed, and wonder how the moments could come and go, and leave ſo little behind them.

To diſcover only that the arguments on both ſides are defective, and to throw back the tenet into its former uncertainty, is the ſport of wanton or malevolent ſcepticiſm, delighting to ſee the ſons of philoſophy at work upon a taſk which never can be finiſhed; at variance on a queſtion that can never be decided. I ſhall ſuggeſt an argument hitherto overlooked, which may perhaps determine the controverſy.

If it be impoſſible to think without materials, there muſt neceſſarily be minds that do not always think; and whence ſhall we furniſh materials for the meditation of the glutton between his meals, of the ſportſman in a rainy month, of the annuitant between the days of quarterly payment, of the politician when the mails are detained by contrary winds?

But how frequent ſoever may be the examples of exiſtence without thought, it is certainly a ſtate not much to be deſired. He that lives in torpid inſenſibility, wants nothing of a carcaſe but putrefaction. It is the part of every inhabitant of the earth to partake the pains and pleaſures of his fellow beings; and, as in a road through a country deſart and uniform, the traveller languiſhes for want of amuſement, ſo the paſſage of life will be tedious and irkſome to him who does not beguile it by diverſified ideas.

NUMB. 25. SATURDAY, *October 7*, 1758.

To the IDLER.

SIR,

I AM a very conſtant frequenter of the playhouſe, a place to which I ſuppoſe the *Idler* not much a ſtranger, ſince he can have no where elſe ſo much entertainment with ſo little concurrence of his own endeavour. At all other aſſemblies, he that comes to receive delight, will be expected to give it; but in the theatre, nothing is neceſſary to the amuſement of two hours, but to ſit down and be willing to be pleaſed.

The laſt week has offered two new actors to the town. The appearance and retirement of actors are the great events of the theatrical world; and their firſt performances fill the pit with conjecture and prognoſtication, as the firſt actions of a new monarch agitate nations with hope or fear.

What opinion I have formed of the future excellence of theſe candidates for dramatick glory, it is not neceſſary to declare. Their entrance gave me a higher and nobler pleaſure than any borrowed character can afford. I ſaw the ranks of the theatre emulating each other in candour and humanity, and contending who ſhould moſt effectually aſſiſt the ſtruggles of endeavour, diſſipate the bluſh of diffidence, and ſtill the flutter of timidity.

This behaviour is ſuch as becomes a people, too tender to repreſs thoſe who wiſh to pleaſe, too generous to inſult thoſe who can make no reſiſtance. A publick performer is ſo much in the power of ſpectators, that all unneceſſary ſeverity is reſtrained by that general law of humanity, which forbids us to be cruel where there is nothing to be feared.

In every new performer ſomething muſt be pardoned. No man can, by any force of reſolution, ſecure to himſelf the full poſſeſſion of his own powers under the eye of a large aſſembly. Variation of geſture, and flexion of voice, are to be obtained only by experience.

There is nothing for which ſuch numbers think themſelves qualified as for theatrical exhibition. Every human being has an action graceful to his own eye, a voice muſical to his own ear, and a ſenſibility which nature forbids him to know that any other boſom can excel. An art in which ſuch numbers fancy themſelves excellent, and which the publick liberally rewards, will excite many competitors, and in many attempts there muſt be many miſcarriages.

The care of the critick ſhould be to diſtinguiſh error from inability, faults of inexperience from defects of nature. Action irregular and turbulent may be reclaimed; vociferation vehement and confuſed may be reſtrained and modulated; the ſtalk of the tyrant may become the gait of a man; the yell of inarticulate diſtreſs may be reduced to human lamentation: All theſe faults ſhould be for a time overlooked, and afterwards cenſured with

gentleneſs and candour. But if in an actor there appears an utter vacancy of meaning, a frigid equality, a ſtupid languor, a torpid apathy, the greateſt kindneſs that can be ſhewn him, is a ſpeedy ſentence of expulſion.

I am, SIR, &c.

THE plea which my correſpondent has offered for young actors, I am very far from wiſhing to invalidate. I always conſidered thoſe combinations which are ſometimes formed in the playhouſe, as acts of fraud or of cruelty; he that applauds him who does not deſerve praiſe, is endeavouring to deceive the publick; he that hiſſes in malice or ſport, is an oppreſſor and a robber.

But ſurely this laudable forbearance might be juſtly extended to young poets. The art of the writer, like that of the player, is attained by ſlow degrees. The power of diſtinguiſhing and diſcriminating comick characters, or of filling tragedy with poetical images, muſt be the gift of nature, which no inſtruction nor labour can ſupply; but the art of dramatick diſpoſition, the contexture of the ſcenes, the oppoſition of characters, the involution of the plot, the expedients of ſuſpenſion, and the ſtratagems of ſurprize, are to be learned by practice; and it is cruel to diſcourage a poet for ever, becauſe he has not from genius what only experience can beſtow.

Life is a ſtage. Let me likewiſe ſollicit candour for the young actor on the ſtage of life. They that enter

enter into the world are too often treated with unreaſonable rigour by thoſe that were once as ignorant and heady as themſelves; and diſtinction is not always made between the faults which require ſpeedy and violent eradication, and thoſe that will gradually drop away in the progreſſion of life. Vicious ſollicitations of appetite, if not checked, will grow more importunate; and mean arts of profit or ambition will gather ſtrength in the mind, if they are not early ſuppreſſed. But miſtaken notions of ſuperiority, deſires of uſeleſs ſhow, pride of little accompliſhments, and all the train of vanity, will be bruſhed away by the wing of time.

Reproof ſhould not exhauſt its power upon petty failings; let it watch diligently againſt the incurſion of vice, and leave foppery and futility to die of themſelves.

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NUMB. 26. SATURDAY, *October* 14, 1758.

Mr. IDLER,

I NEVER thought that I ſhould write any thing to be printed; but having lately ſeen your firſt eſſay, which was ſent down into the kitchen, with a great bundle of gazettes and uſeleſs papers, I find that you are willing to admit any correſpondent, and therefore hope you will not reject me. If you publiſh my letter, it may encourage others, in the ſame condition with myſelf, to tell their ſtories, which may be perhaps as uſeful as thoſe of great ladies.

I am a poor girl. I was bred in the country at a charity-ſchool, maintained by the contributions of wealthy neighbours. The ladies, or patroneſſes, viſited us from time to time, examined how we were taught, and ſaw that our clothes were clean. We lived happily enough, and were inſtructed to be thankful to thoſe at whoſe coſt we were educated. I was always the favourite of my miſtreſs; ſhe uſed to call me to read and ſhew my copy-book to all ſtrangers, who never diſmiſſed me without commendation, and very ſeldom without a ſhilling.

At laſt the chief of our ſubſcribers, having paſſed a winter in *London*, came down full of an opinion new and ſtrange to the whole country. She held it little leſs than criminal to teach poor girls to read and write. They who are born to poverty, ſhe ſaid, are

born to ignorance, and will work the harder the leſs they know. She told her friends, that *London* was in confuſion by the inſolence of ſervants; that ſcarcely a wench was to be got for *all work*, ſince education had made ſuch numbers of fine ladies, that nobody would now accept a lower title than that of a waiting-maid, or ſomething that might qualify her to wear laced ſhoes and long ruffles, and to ſit at work in the parlour window. But ſhe was reſolved, for her part, to ſpoil no more girls; thoſe who were to live by their hands, ſhould neither read nor write out of her pocket; the world was bad enough already, and ſhe would have no part in making it worſe.

She was for a ſhort time warmly oppoſed; but ſhe perſevered in her notions, and withdrew her ſubſcription. Few liſten without a deſire of conviction to thoſe who adviſe them to ſpare their money. Her example and her arguments gained ground daily, and in leſs than a year the whole pariſh was convinced, that the nation would be ruined, if the children of the poor were taught to read and write.

Our ſchool was now diſſolved; my miſtreſs kiſſed me when we parted, and told me, that, being old and helpleſs, ſhe could not aſſiſt me, adviſed me to ſeek a ſervice, and charged me not to forget what I had learned.

My reputation for ſcholarſhip, which had hitherto recommended me to favour, was, by the adherents to the new opinion, conſidered as a crime; and, when I offered myſelf to any miſtreſs, I had no other anſwer than, *Sure, child, you would not work; hard*

work is not fit for a pen-woman; a ſcrubbing-bruſh would ſpoil your hand, child!

I could not live at home; and while I was conſidering to what I ſhould betake me, one of the girls, who had gone from our ſchool to *London*, came down in a ſilk gown, and told her acquaintance how well ſhe lived, what fine things ſhe ſaw, and what great wages ſhe received. I reſolved to try my fortune, and took my paſſage in the next week's waggon to *London*. I had no ſnares laid for me at my arrival, but came ſafe to a ſiſter of my miſtreſs, who undertook to get me a place. She knew only the families of mean tradeſmen; and I, having no high opinion of my own qualifications, was willing to accept the firſt offer.

My firſt miſtreſs was wife of a working watchmaker, who earned more than was ſufficient to keep his family in decency and plenty; but it was their conſtant practice to hire a chaiſe on *Sunday*, and ſpend half the wages of the week on *Richmond Hill*; of *Monday* he commonly lay half in bed, and ſpent the other half in merriment; *Tueſday* and *Wedneſday* conſumed the reſt of his money; and three days every week were paſſed in extremity of want by us who were left at home, while my maſter lived on truſt at an alehouſe. You may be ſure, that of the ſufferers the maid ſuffered moſt; and I left them, after three months rather than be ſtarved.

I was then maid to a hatter's wife. There was no want to be dreaded, for they lived in perpetual luxury

luxury. My miſtreſs was a diligent woman, and roſe early in the morning to ſet the journeymen to work; my maſter was a man much beloved by his neighbours, and ſat at one club or other every night. I was obliged to wait on my maſter at night, and on my miſtreſs in the morning. He ſeldom came home before two, and ſhe roſe at five. I could no more live without ſleep than without food, and therefore entreated them to look out for another ſervant.

My next removal was to a linen-draper's, who had ſix children. My miſtreſs, when I firſt entered the houſe, informed me, that I muſt never contradict the children, nor ſuffer them to cry. I had no deſire to offend, and readily promiſed to do my beſt. But when I gave them their breakfaſt, I could not help all firſt; when I was playing with one in my lap, I was forced to keep the reſt in expectation. That which was not gratified always reſented the injury with a loud outcry, which put my miſtreſs in a fury at me, and procured ſugar-plums to the child. I could not keep ſix children quiet, who were bribed to be clamorous; and was therefore diſmiſſed, as a girl honeſt, but not good-natured.

I then lived with a couple that kept a petty ſhop of remnants and cheap linen. I was qualified to make a bill, or keep a book; and being therefore often called, at a buſy time, to ſerve the cuſtomers, expected that I ſhould now be happy, in proportion as I was uſeful. But my miſtreſs appropriated every day part of the profit to ſome private uſe,

and, as ſhe grew bolder in her theft, at laſt deducted ſuch ſums, that my maſter began to wonder how he ſold ſo much, and gained ſo little. She pretended to aſſiſt his enquiries, and began very gravely, to hope that *Betty was honeſt; and yet thoſe ſharp girls were apt to be light-fingered.* You will believe that I did not ſtay there much longer.

The reſt of my ſtory I will tell you in another letter, and only beg to be informed, in ſome paper, for which of my places, except perhaps the laſt, I was diſqualified, by my ſkill in reading and writing.

I am, SIR,

Your very humble ſervant,

BETTY BROOM.

NUMB. 27. SATURDAY, *October* 21, 1758.

IT has been the endeavour of all thoſe whom the world has reverenced for ſuperior wiſdom, to perſuade man to be acquainted with himſelf, to learn his own powers and his own weakneſs, to obſerve by what evils he is moſt dangerouſly beſet, and by what temptations moſt eaſily overcome.

This counſel has been often given with ſerious dignity, and often received with appearance of conviction; but, as very few can ſearch deep into their own minds without meeting what they wiſh to hide from themſelves, ſcarce any man perſiſts in cultivating ſuch diſagreeable acquaintance, but draws the veil again between his eyes and his heart, leaves his paſſions and appetites as he found them, and adviſes others to look into themſelves.

This is the common reſult of enquiry even among thoſe that endeavour to grow wiſer or better, but this endeavour is far enough from frequency; the greater part of the multitudes that ſwarm upon the earth have never been diſturbed by ſuch uneaſy curioſity, but deliver themſelves up to buſineſs or to pleaſure, plunge into the current of life, whether placid or turbulent, and paſs on from one point of proſpect to another, attentive rather to any thing than the ſtate of their minds;

ſatis-

ſatisfied, at an eaſy rate, with an opinion, that they are no worſe than others, that every man muſt mind his own intereſt, or that their pleaſures hurt only themſelves, and are therefore no proper ſubjects of cenſure.

Some, however, there are, whom the intruſion of ſcruples, the recollection of better notions, or the latent reprehenſion of good examples, will not ſuffer to live entirely contented with their own conduct; theſe are forced to pacify the mutiny of reaſon with fair promiſes, and quiet their thoughts with deſigns of calling all their actions to review, and planning a new ſcheme for the time to come.

There is nothing which we eſtimate ſo fallaciouſly as the force of our own reſolutions, nor any ſallacy which we ſo unwillingly and tardily detect. He that has reſolved a thouſand times, and a thouſand times deſerted his own purpoſe, yet ſuffers no abatement of his confidence, but ſtill believes himſelf his own maſter; and able, by innate vigour of ſoul, to preſs forward to his end, through all the obſtructions that inconveniences or delights can put in his way.

That this miſtake ſhould prevail for a time, is very natural. When conviction is preſent, and temptation out of ſight, we do not eaſily conceive how any reaſonable being can deviate from his true intereſt. What ought to be done while it yet hangs only in ſpeculation, is ſo plain and certain, that there is no place for doubt; the whole ſoul yields itſelf to the predominance of truth, and readily determines

termines to do what, when the time of action comes, will be at laſt omitted.

I believe moſt men may review all the lives that have paſſed within their obſervation, without remembering one efficacious reſolution, or being able to tell a ſingle inſtance of a courſe of practice ſuddenly changed in conſequence of a change of opinion, or an eſtabliſhment of determination. Many indeed alter their conduct, and are not at fifty what they were at thirty, but they commonly varied imperceptibly from themſelves, followed the train of external cauſes, and rather ſuffered reformation than made it.

It is not uncommon to charge the difference between promiſe and performance, between profeſſion and reality, upon deep deſign and ſtudied deceit; but the truth is, that there is very little hypocriſy in the world; we do not ſo often endeavour or wiſh to impoſe on others as on ourſelves; we reſolve to do right, we hope to keep our reſolutions, we declare them to confirm our own hope, and fix our own inconſtancy by calling witneſſes of our actions; but at laſt habit prevails, and thoſe whom we invited to our triumph, laugh at our defeat.

Cuſtom is commonly too ſtrong for the moſt reſolute reſolver, though furniſhed for the aſſault with all the weapons of philoſophy. "He that endeavours to free himſelf from an ill habit," ſays *Bacon*, "muſt not change too much at a time, leſt "he ſhould be diſcouraged by difficulty; nor "too little, for then he will make but ſlow advances." This is a precept which may be applauded

plauded in a book, but will fail in the trial, in which every change will be found too great or too little. Thoſe who have been able to conquer habit, are like thoſe that are fabled to have returned from the realms of *Pluto*:

Pauci, quos æquus amavit
Jupiter, atque ardens evexit ad æthera virtus.

They are ſufficient to give hope, but not ſecurity; to animate the conteſt, but not to promiſe victory.

Thoſe who are in the power of evil habits muſt conquer them as they can; and conquered they muſt be, or neither wiſdom nor happineſs can be attained: but thoſe who are not yet ſubject to their influence may, by timely caution, preſerve their freedom; they may effectually reſolve to eſcape the tyrant, whom they will very vainly reſolve to conquer.

NUMB. 28. SATURDAY, *October* 28, 1758.

To the IDLER.

SIR,

IT is very eaſy for a man who ſits idle at home, and has nobody to pleaſe but himſelf, to ridicule or to cenſure the common practices of mankind; and thoſe who have no preſent temptation to break the rules of propriety, may applaud his judgment, and join in his merriment; but let the author or his readers mingle with common life, they will find themſelves irreſiſtibly borne away by the ſtream of cuſtom, and muſt ſubmit, after they have laughed at others, to give others the ſame opportunity of laughing at them.

There is no paper publiſhed by the *Idler* which I have read with more approbation than that which cenſures the practice of recording vulgar marriages in the newſpapers. I carried it about in my pocket, and read it to all thoſe whom I ſuſpected of having publiſhed their nuptials, or of being inclined to publiſh them, and ſent tranſcripts of it to all the couples that tranſgreſſed your precepts for the next fortnight. I hoped that they were all vexed, and pleaſed myſelf with imagining their miſery.

But ſhort is the triumph of malignity. I was married laſt week to Miſs *Mohair*, the daughter

of

of a ſaleſman; and at my firſt appearance aft
the wedding night, was aſked by my wife's mothe
whether I had ſent our marriage to the *Advertiſer*
I endeavoured to ſhew how unfit it was to deman
the attention of the publick to our domeſtick a
fairs; but ſhe told me, with great vehemenc
" That ſhe would not have it thought to be
" ſtolen match; that the blood of the *Mohai*
" ſhould never be diſgraced; that her huſban
" had ſerved all the pariſh offices but one; th
" ſhe had lived five and thirty years at the ſan
" houſe, had paid every body twenty ſhillings
" the pound, and would have me know, thou
" ſhe was not as fine and as flaunting as Mr
" *Gingbum*, the deputy's wife, ſhe was not aſham
" to tell her name, and would ſhew her face wi
" the beſt of them, and ſince I had married h
" daughter——" At this inſtant entered my f
ther-in-law, a grave man, from whom I expect
ſuccour; but upon hearing the caſe he told m
" That it would be very imprudent to miſs ſu
" an opportunity of advertiſing my ſhop; and th
" when notice was given of my marriage, ma
" of my wife's friends would think themſelv
" obliged to be my cuſtomers." I was ſubdued
clamour on one ſide, and gravity on the other, a
ſhall be obliged to tell the town, that *three days ag*
Timothy Muſhroom, *an eminent oilman in* Sea-Co
Lane, *was married to Miſs* Polly Mohair *of* Lot
bury, *a beautiful young lady, with a large fortune.*

I am, SIR, &c.

SIR,

I AM the unfortunate wife of the grocer whoſe letter you publiſhed about ten weeks ago, in which he complains, like a ſorry fellow, that I loiter in the ſhop with my needle-work in my hand, and that I oblige him to take me out on *Sundays*, and keep a girl to look after the child. Sweet Mr. *Idler*, if you did but know all, you would give no encouragement to ſuch an unreaſonable grumbler. I brought him three hundred pounds, which ſet him up in a ſhop, and bought in a ſtock, on which, with good management, we might live comfortably; but now I have given him a ſhop, I am forced to watch him and the ſhop too. I will tell you, Mr. *Idler*, how it is. There is an alehouſe over the way with a ninepin alley, to which he is ſure to run when I turn my back, and there loſes his money, for he plays at ninepins as he does every thing elſe. While he is at this favourite ſport, he ſets a dirty boy to watch his door, and call him to his cuſtomers, but he is long in coming, and ſo rude when he comes, that our cuſtom falls off every day.

Thoſe who cannot govern themſelves, muſt be governed. I have reſolved to keep him for the future behind his counter, and let him bounce at his cuſtomers if he dares. I cannot be above ſtairs and below at the ſame time, and have therefore taken a girl to look after the child and dreſs the dinner; and, after all, pray who is to blame?

On a *Sunday*, it is true, I make him walk abroad, and ſometimes carry the child; I wonder who ſhould carry it! But I never take him out till after church-

time, nor would do it then, but that, if he is left alone, he will be upon the bed. On a *Sunday*, if he ſtays at home, he has ſix meals, and, when he can eat no longer, has twenty ſtratagems to eſcape from me to the alehouſe; but I commonly keep the door locked, till *Monday* produces ſomething for him to do.

This is the true ſtate of the caſe, and theſe are the provocations for which he has written his letter to you. I hope you will write a paper to ſhew, that, if a wife muſt ſpend her whole time in watching her huſband, ſhe cannot conveniently tend her child, or ſit at her needle.

I am, SIR, &c.

SIR,

THERE is in this town a ſpecies of oppreſſion which the law has not hitherto prevented or redreſſed.

I am a chairman. You know, Sir, we come when we are called, and are expected to carry all who require our aſſiſtance. It is common for men of the moſt unwieldy corpulence to crowd themſelves into a chair, and demand to be carried for a ſhilling as far as an airy young lady whom we ſcarcely feel upon our poles. Surely we ought to be paid like all other mortals in proportion to our labour. Engines ſhould be fixed in proper places to weigh chairs as they weigh waggons; and thoſe whom eaſe and plenty have made unable to carry themſelves, ſhould give part of their ſuperfluities to thoſe who carry them.

I am, SIR, &c.

NUMB. 29. SATURDAY, *November* 4, 1758.

To the IDLER.

SIR,

I HAVE often obſerved, that friends are loſt by diſcontinuance of intercourſe without any offence on either part, and have long known, that it is more dangerous to be forgotten than to be blamed; I therefore make haſte to ſend you the reſt of my ſtory, leſt, by the delay of another fortnight, the name of *Betty Broom* might be no longer remembered by you or your readers.

Having left the laſt place in haſte to avoid the charge or the ſuſpicion of theft, I had not ſecured another ſervice, and was forced to take a lodging in a back ſtreet. I had now got good clothes. The woman who lived in the garret oppoſite to mine was very officious, and offered to take care of my room and clean it, while I went round to my acquaintance to enquire for a miſtreſs. I knew not why ſhe was ſo kind, nor how I could recompenſe her; but in a few days I miſſed ſome of my linen, went to another lodging, and reſolved not to have another friend in the next garret.

In ſix weeks I became under-maid at the houſe of a mercer in *Cornhill*, whoſe ſon was his apprentice. The young gentleman uſed to ſit late at the tavern, without the knowledge of his father; and I was ordered by my miſtreſs to let him in ſilently to his bed

under the counter, and to be very careful to take away his candle. The hours which I was obliged to watch, whilſt the reſt of the family was in bed, I conſidered as ſupernumerary, and, having no buſineſs aſſigned for them, thought myſelf at liberty to ſpend them my own way: I kept myſelf awake with a book, and for ſome time liked my ſtate the better for this opportunity of reading. At laſt, the upper-maid found my book, and ſhewed it to my miſtreſs, who told me, that wenches like me might ſpend their time better; that ſhe never knew any of the readers that had good deſigns in their heads; that ſhe could always find ſomething elſe to do with her time, than to puzzle over books; and did not like that ſuch a fine lady ſhould ſit up for her young maſter.

This was the firſt time that I found it thought criminal or dangerous to know how to read. I was diſmiſſed decently, leſt I ſhould tell tales, and had a ſmall gratuity above my wages.

I then lived with a gentlewoman of a ſmall fortune. This was the only happy part of my life. My miſtreſs, for whom publick diverſions were too expenſive, ſpent her time with books, and was pleaſed to find a maid who could partake her amuſements. I roſe early in the morning, that I might have time in the afternoon to read or liſten, and was ſuffered to tell my opinion, or expreſs my delight. Thus fifteen months ſtole away, in which I did not repine that I was born to ſervitude. But a burning fever ſeized my miſtreſs, of whom I ſhall ſay no more, than that her ſervant wept upon her grave.

I had lived in a kind of luxury, which made me *very unfit for* another place; and was rather too de-

licate

licate for the converſation of a kitchen; ſo that when I was hired in the family of an Eaſt India director, my behaviour was ſo different, as they ſaid, from that of a common ſervant, that they concluded me a gentlewoman in diſguiſe, and turned me out in three weeks, on ſuſpicion of ſome deſign which they could not comprehend.

I then fled for refuge to the other end of the town, where I hoped to find no obſtruction from my new accompliſhments, and was hired under the houſe-keeper in a ſplendid family. Here I was too wiſe for the maids, and too nice for the footmen; yet I might have lived on without much uneaſineſs, had not my miſtreſs, the houſekeeper, who uſed to employ me in buying neceſſaries for the family, found a bill which I had made of one day's expences. I ſuppoſe it did not quite agree with her own book, for ſhe fiercely declared her reſolution, that there ſhould be no pen and ink in that kitchen but her own.

She had the juſtice, or the prudence, not to injure my reputation; and I was eaſily admitted into another houſe in the neighbourhood, where my buſineſs was to ſweep the rooms and make the beds. Here I was, for ſome time, the favourite of Mrs. *Simper*, my lady's woman, who could not bear the vulgar girls, and was happy in the attendance of a young woman of ſome education. Mrs. *Simper* loved a novel, though ſhe could not read hard words, and therefore, when her lady was abroad, we always laid hold on her books. At laſt, my abilities became ſo much celebrated, that the houſe-ſteward uſed to employ me in keeping his accounts. Mrs. Simper then

found out, that my ſaucineſs was grown to ſuch a height that nobody could endure it, and told my lady, that there never had been a room well ſwept ſince *Betty Broom* came into the houſe.

I was then hired by a conſumptive lady, who wanted a maid that could read and write. I attended her four years, and though ſhe was never pleaſed, yet when I declared my reſolution to leave her, ſhe burſt into tears, and told me that I muſt bear the peeviſhneſs of a ſick bed, and I ſhould find myſelf remembered in her will. I complied, and a codicil was added in my favour; but in leſs than a week, when I ſet her gruel before her, I laid the ſpoon on the left ſide, and ſhe threw her will into the fire. In two days ſhe made another, which ſhe burnt in the ſame manner becauſe ſhe could not eat her chicken. A third was made, and deſtroyed becauſe ſhe heard a mouſe within the wainſcot, and was ſure that I ſhould ſuffer her to be carried away alive. After this I was for ſome time out of favour, but as her illneſs grew upon her, reſentment and ſullenneſs gave way to kinder ſentiments. She died, and left me five hundred pounds; with this fortune I am going to ſettle in my native pariſh, where I reſolve to ſpend ſome hours every day in teaching poor girls to read and write.

I am, SIR,

Your humble ſervant,

BETTY BROOM.

NUMB. 30. SATURDAY, *November* 11, 1758.

THE deſires of man encreaſe with his acquiſitions; every ſtep which he advances brings ſomething within his view, which he did not ſee before, and which, as ſoon as he ſees it, he begins to want. Where neceſſity ends, curioſity begins; and no ſooner are we ſupplied with every thing that nature can demand, than we ſit down to contrive artificial appetites.

By this reſtleſſneſs of mind, every populous and wealthy city is filled with innumerable employments, for which the greater part of mankind is without a name; with artificers, whoſe labour is exerted in producing ſuch petty conveniences, that many ſhops are furniſhed with inſtruments, of which the uſe can hardly be found without enquiry, but which he that once knows them quickly learns to number among neceſſary things.

Such is the diligence with which, in countries completely civilized, one part of mankind labours for another, that wants are ſupplied faſter than they can be formed, and the idle and luxurious find life ſtagnate for want of ſome deſire to keep it in motion. This ſpecies of diſtreſs furniſhes a new ſet of occupations; and multitudes are buſied, from day to day, in finding the rich and the fortunate ſomething to do.

It is very common to reproach thoſe artiſts as uſeleſs, who produce only ſuch ſuperfluities as neither accommodate the body nor improve the mind; and of which no other effect can be imagined, than that they are the occaſions of ſpending money, and conſuming time.

But this cenſure will be mitigated, when it is ſeriouſly conſidered, that money and time are the heavieſt burthens of life, and that the unhappieſt of all mortals are thoſe who have more of either than they know how to uſe. To ſet himſelf free from theſe incumbrances, one hurries to *Newmarket*; another travels over *Europe*; one pulls down his houſe and calls architects about him; another buys a ſeat in the country, and follows his hounds over hedges and through rivers; one makes collections of ſhells; and another ſearches the world for tulips and carnations.

He is ſurely a publick benefactor who finds employment for thoſe to whom it is thus difficult to find it for themſelves. It is true that this is ſeldom done merely from generoſity or compaſſion; almoſt every man ſeeks his own advantage in helping others, and therefore it is too common for mercenary officiouſneſs to conſider rather what is grateful, than what is right.

We all know that it is more profitable to be loved than eſteemed; and miniſters of pleaſure will always be found, who ſtudy to make themſelves neceſſary, and to ſupplant thoſe who are practiſing the ſame arts.

One of the amuſements of idleneſs is reading without the fatigue of cloſe attention, and the world

therefore ſwarms with writers whoſe wiſh is not to be ſtudied, but to be read.

No ſpecies of literary men has lately been ſo much multiplied as the writers of news. Not many years ago the nation was content with one gazette; but now we have not only in the metropolis papers for every morning and every evening, but almoſt every large town has its weekly hiſtorian, who regularly circulates his periodical intelligence, and fills the villages of his diſtrict with conjectures on the events of war, and with debates on the true intereſt of *Europe*.

To write news in its perfection requires ſuch a combination of qualities, that a man completely fitted for the taſk is not always to be found. In Sir *Henry Wotton*'s jocular definition, *An ambaſſador* is ſaid to be *a man of virtue ſent abroad to tell lies for the advantage of his country*; a news-writer is *a man without virtue, who writes lies at home for his own profit*. To theſe compoſitions is required neither genius nor knowledge, neither induſtry nor ſprightlineſs; but contempt of ſhame and indifference to truth are abſolutely neceſſary. He who by a long familiarity with infamy has obtained theſe qualities, may confidently tell to-day what he intends to contradict to-morrow; he may affirm fearleſsly what he knows that he ſhall be obliged to recant, and may write letters from *Amſterdam* or *Dreſden* to himſelf.

In a time of war the nation is always of one mind, eager to hear ſomething good of themſelves and ill of the enemy. At this time the taſk of news-writers is eaſy: they have nothing to do but to tell, that a battle is expected, and afterwards that a battle

has been fought, in which we and our friends, whether conquering or conquered, did all, and our enemies did nothing.

Scarce any thing awakes attention like a tale of cruelty. The writer of news never fails in the intermiſſion of action to tell how the enemies murdered children and raviſhed virgins; and if the ſcene of action be ſomewhat diſtant, ſcalps half the inhabitants of a province.

Among the calamities of war may be juſtly numbered the diminution of the love of truth, by the falſehoods which intereſt dictates and credulity encourages. A peace will equally leave the warrior and relator of wars deſtitute of employment; and I know not whether more is to be dreaded from ſtreets filled with ſoldiers accuſtomed to plunder, or from garrets filled with ſcribblers accuſtomed to lie.

NUMB. 31. SATURDAY, *November* 18, 1758.

MANY moraliſts have remarked, that pride has of all human vices the wideſt dominion, appears in the greateſt multiplicity of forms, and lies hid under the greateſt variety of diſguiſes; of diſguiſes, which, like the moon's *veil of brightneſs*, are both its *luſtre and its ſhade*, and betray it to others, though they hide it from ourſelves.

It is not my intention to degrade pride from this pre-eminence of miſchief; yet I know not whether idleneſs may not maintain a very doubtful and obſtinate competition.

There are ſome that profeſs idleneſs in its full dignity, who call themſelves the *Idle*, as *Buſiris* in the play *calls himſelf the proud*; who boaſt that they do nothing, and thank their ſtars that they have nothing to do; who ſleep every night till they can ſleep no longer, and riſe only that exerciſe may enable them to ſleep again; who prolong the reign of darkneſs by double curtains, and never ſee the ſun but to *tell him how they hate his beams*; whoſe whole labour is to vary the poſtures of indulgence, and whoſe day differs from their night but as a couch or chair differs from a bed.

Theſe are the true and open votaries of idleneſs, for whom ſhe weaves the garlands of poppies, and into whoſe cup ſhe pours the waters of oblivion; who exiſt in a ſtate of unruffled ſtupidity, forgetting

and

and forgotten; who have long ceaſed to
at whoſe death the ſurvivors can only ſay,
have ceaſed to breathe.

But idleneſs predominates in many live
is not ſuſpected; for, being a vice wh
nates in itſelf, it may be enjoyed withou
others; and is therefore not watched l
which endangers property; or like pri
naturally ſeeks its gratifications in anot
riority. Idleneſs is a ſilent and peaceſi
that neither raiſes envy by oſtentation,
by oppoſition; and therefore nobody is b
ſure or detect it.

As pride ſometimes is hid under humi
neſs is often covered by turbulence and h
that neglects his known duty and real em
naturally endeavours to crowd his mind v
thing that may bar out the remembrance
ſolly, and does any thing but what he ou
with eager diligence, that he may keep
his own favour.

Some are always in a ſtate of preparati
pied in previous meaſures, forming plans,
lating materials, and providing for the m
Theſe are certainly under the ſecret powe
neſs. Nothing is to be expected from
man whoſe tools are for ever to be ſougl
once told by a great maſter, that no ma
celled in painting, who was eminently cur
pencils and colours.

There are others to whom idleneſs dictat
expedient, by which life may be paſſed ur
away without the tedioufneſs of many vac

The art is, to fill the day with petty buſineſs, to have always ſomething in hand which may raiſe curioſity, but not ſolicitude, and keep the mind in a ſtate of action, but not of labour.

This art has for many years been practiſed by my old friend *Sober* with wonderful ſucceſs. *Sober* is a man of ſtrong deſires and quick imagination, ſo exactly balanced by the love of eaſe, that they can ſeldom ſtimulate him to any difficult undertaking; they have, however, ſo much power, that they will not ſuffer him to lie quite at reſt, and though they do not make him ſufficiently uſeful to others, they make him at leaſt weary of himſelf.

Mr. *Sober*'s chief pleaſure is converſation; there is no end of his talk or his attention; to ſpeak or to hear is equally pleaſing; for he ſtill fancies that he is teaching or learning ſomething, and is free for the time from his own reproaches.

But there is one time at night when he muſt go home, that his friends may ſleep; and another time in the morning, when all the world agrees to ſhut out interruption. Theſe are the moments of which poor *Sober* trembles at the thought. But the miſery of theſe tireſome intervals, he has many means of alleviating. He has perſuaded himſelf, that the manual arts are undeſervedly overlooked; he has obſerved in many trades the effects of cloſe thought, and juſt ratiocination. From ſpeculation he proceeded to practice, and ſupplied himſelf with the tools of a carpenter, with which he mended his coal-box very ſucceſsfully, and which he ſtill continues to employ, as he finds occaſion.

He

He has attempted at other times the crafts of th ſhoemaker, tinman, plumber, and potter; in al theſe arts he has failed, and reſolves to qualify him ſelf for them by better information. But his dail amuſement is chemiſtry. He has a ſmall furnace which he employs in diſtillation, and which has lon been the ſolace of his life. He draws oils and wa ters, and eſſences and ſpirits, which he knows to b of no uſe; ſits and counts the drops as they com from his retort, and forgets that, whilſt a drop i falling, a moment flies away.

Poor *Sober!* I have often teazed him with reproof and he has often promiſed reformation; for no man is ſo much open to conviction as the *Idler*, but there is none on whom it operates ſo little. What will b the effect of this paper I know not; perhaps he wil read it and laugh, and light the fire in his furnace but my hope is, that he will quit his trifles, and be take himſelf to rational and uſeful diligence.

NUMB. 32. SATURDAY, *November* 25, 1758.

AMONG the innumerable mortifications that way-lay human arrogance on every ſide, may well be reckoned our ignorance of the moſt common objects and effects, a defect of which we become more ſenſible by every attempt to ſupply it. Vulgar and inactive minds confound familiarity with knowledge, and conceive themſelves informed of the whole nature of things when they are ſhewn their form or told their uſe; but the ſpeculatiſt, who is not content with ſuperficial views, haraſſes himſelf with fruitleſs curioſity, and ſtill as he enquires more, perceives only that he knows leſs.

Sleep is a ſtate in which a great part of every life is paſſed. No animal has been yet diſcovered, whoſe exiſtence is not varied with intervals of inſenſibility; and ſome late philoſophers have extended the empire of ſleep over the vegetable world.

Yet of this change, ſo frequent, ſo great, ſo general, and ſo neceſſary, no ſearcher has yet found either the efficient or final cauſe; or can tell by what power the mind and body are thus chained down in irreſiſtible ſtupefaction; or what benefits the animal receives from this alternate ſuſpenſion of its active powers.

Whatever may be the multiplicity or contrariety of opinions upon this ſubject, nature has taken ſufficient care that theory ſhall have little influence on practice. The moſt diligent enquirer is not able

long to keep his eyes open; the moſt eager diſputa will begin about midnight to deſert his argumen and, once in four and twenty hours, the gay and t gloomy, the witty and the dull, the clamorous a the ſilent, the buſy and the idle, are all overpower by the gentle tyrant, and all lie down in the equali of ſleep.

Philoſophy has often attempted to repreſs inſ lence, by aſſerting, that all conditions are levell by death; a poſition which, however it may dej the happy, will ſeldom afford much comfort to t wretched. It is far more pleaſing to conſider, th ſleep is equally a leveller with death; that the tir is never at a great diſtance, when the balm of r ſhall be effuſed alike upon every head, when the c verſities of life ſhall ſtop their operation, and t high and the low ſhall lie down together.

It is ſomewhere recorded of *Alexander*, that in t pride of conqueſts, and intoxication of flattery, declared that he only perceived himſelf to be a m by the neceſſity of ſleep. Whether he conſider ſleep as neceſſary to his mind or body, it was inde a ſufficient evidence of human infirmity; the bo which required ſuch frequency of renovation, ga but faint promiſes of immortality; and the mi which, from time to time, ſunk gladly into inſen bility, had made no very near approaches to the f licity of the ſupreme and ſelf-ſufficient nature.

I know not what can tend more to repreſs all th paſſions that diſturb the peace of the world, than th conſideration that there is no height of happineſs honour, from which man does not eagerly deſcer *to a ſtate of* unconſcious repoſe; that the beſt co

dition of life is ſuch, that we contentedly quit its good to be diſentangled from its evils; that in a few hours ſplendor fades before the eye, and praiſe itſelf deadens in the ear; the ſenſes withdraw from their objects, and reaſon favours the retreat.

What then are the hopes and proſpects of covetouſneſs, ambition, and rapacity? Let him that deſires moſt have all his deſires gratified, he never ſhall attain a ſtate, which he can, for a day and a night, contemplate with ſatisfaction, or from which, if he had the power of perpetual vigilance, he would not long for periodical ſeparations.

All envy would be extinguiſhed, if it were univerſally known that there are none to be envied, and ſurely none can be much envied who are not pleaſed with themſelves. There is reaſon to ſuſpect, that the diſtinctions of mankind have more ſhew than value, when it is found that all agree to be weary alike of pleaſures and of cares; that the powerful and the weak, the celebrated and obſcure, join in one common wiſh, and implore from nature's hand the nectar of oblivion.

Such is our deſire of abſtraction from ourſelves, that very few are ſatisfied with the quantity of ſtupefaction which the needs of the body force upon the mind. *Alexander* himſelf added intemperance to ſleep, and ſolaced with the fumes of wine the ſovereignty of the world; and almoſt every man has ſome art, by which he ſteals his thoughts away from his preſent ſtate.

It is not much of life that is ſpent in cloſe attention to any important duty. Many hours of every day are ſuffered to fly away without any traces left

upon

upon the intellects. We ſuffer phantoms to riſe up before us, and amuſe ourſelves with the dance of airy images, which, after a time, we diſmiſs for ever and know not how we have been buſied.

Many have no happier moments than thoſe that they paſs in ſolitude, abandoned to their own imagination, which ſometimes puts ſceptres in their hands or mitres on their heads, ſhifts the ſcene of pleaſure with endleſs variety, bids all the forms of beauty ſparkle before them, and gluts them with every change of viſionary luxury.

It is eaſy in theſe ſemi-ſlumbers to collect all the poſſibilities of happineſs, to alter the courſe of the ſun, to bring back the paſt, and anticipate the future, to unite all the beauties of all ſeaſons, and all the bleſſings of all climates, to receive and beſtow felicity, and forget that miſery is the lot of man. All this is a voluntary dream, a temporary receſſion from the realities of life to airy fictions; and habitual ſubjection of reaſon to fancy.

Others are afraid to be alone, and amuſe themſelves by a perpetual ſucceſſion of companions: but the difference is not great; in ſolitude we have our dreams to ourſelves, and in company we agree to dream in concert. The end ſought in both is forgetfulneſs of ourſelves.

NUMB. 33. SATURDAY, *December* 2, 1758.

[I hope the author of the following letter will excuſe the omiſſion of ſome parts, and allow me to remark, that the Journal of the Citizen in the *Spectator* has almoſt precluded the attempt of any future writer.]

——Non ita Romuli
Præſcriptum, & intonſi Catonis
Auſpiciis, veterumque normâ. HOR.

SIR,

YOU have often ſolicited correſpondence. I have ſent you the *Journal* of a *Senior Fellow*, or *Genuine Idler*, juſt tranſmitted from *Cambridge* by a facetious correſpondent, and warranted to have been tranſcribed from the common-place book of the journaliſt.

Monday, Nine o'Clock. Turned off my bed-maker for waking me at eight. Weather rainy. Conſulted my weather-glaſs. No hopes of a ride before dinner.

Ditto, Ten. After breakfaſt, tranſcribed half a ſermon from Dr. *Hickman*. *N. B.* Never to tranſcribe any more from *Calamy*; Mrs. *Pilcocks*, at my curacy, having one volume of that author lying in her parlour-window.

Ditto, Eleven. Went down into my cellar. *Mem.* My *Mountain* will be fit to drink in a month's time. *N. B.* To remove the five-year-old port into the new bin on the left hand.

Ditto, Twelve. Mended a pen. Looked at my weather-glaſs again. Quickſilver very low. Shaved. Barber's hand ſhakes.

Ditto, One. Dined alone in my room on a ſoal. *N. B.* The ſhrimp-ſauce not ſo good as Mr. *H.* of *Peterhouſe* and I uſed to eat in *London* laſt winter at the *Mitre* in *Fleet-ſtreet.* Sat down to a pint of *Madeira.* Mr. *H.* ſurpriſed me over it. We finiſhed two bottles of port together, and were very cheerful. *Mem.* To dine with Mr. *H.* at *Peterhouſe* next *Wedneſday.* One of the diſhes a leg of pork and peaſe, by my deſire.

Ditto, Six. Newſpaper in the common-room.

Ditto, Seven. Returned to my room. Made a tiff of warm punch, and to bed before nine; did not fall aſleep till ten, a young fellow-commoner being very noiſy over my head.

Tueſday, Nine. Roſe ſqueamiſh. A fine morning. Weather-glaſs very high.

Ditto, Ten. Ordered my horſe, and rode to the five-mile ſtone on the *Newmarket* road. Appetite gets better. A pack of hounds, in full cry, croſſed the road, and ſtartled my horſe.

Ditto, Twelve. Dreſt. Found a letter on my table to be in *London* the 19th inſt. Beſpoke a new wig.

Ditto, One. At dinner in the hall. Too much water in the ſoup. Dr. *Dry* always orders the beef to be ſalted too much for me.

Ditto, Two. In the common-room. Dr. *Dry* gave us an inſtance of a gentleman who kept the gout out of his ſtomach by drinking old *Madeira*. Converſation chiefly on the expeditions. Company broke up at four. Dr. *Dry* and myſelf played at back-gammon for a brace of ſnipes. Won.

Ditto, Five. At the coffee-houſe. Met Mr. *H.* there. Could not get a ſight of the *Monitor*.

Ditto, Seven. Returned home, and ſtirred my fire. Went to the common-room, and ſupped on the ſnipes with Dr. *Dry*.

Ditto, Eight. Began the evening in the common-room. Dr. *Dry* told ſeveral ſtories. Were very merry. Our new fellow, that ſtudies phyſick, very talkative toward twelve. Pretends he will bring the youngeſt Miſs —— to drink tea with me ſoon. Impertinent blockhead!

Wedneſday, Nine. Alarmed with a pain in my ancle. *Q.* The gout? Fear I can't dine at *Peterhouſe*; but I hope a ride will ſet all to rights. Weather-glaſs below FAIR.

Ditto, Ten. Mounted my horſe, though the weather ſuſpicious. Pain in my ancle entirely gone. Catched in a ſhower coming back. Convinced that my weather-glaſs is the beſt in *Cambridge*.

Ditto, Twelve. Dreſt. Sauntered up to the *Fiſhmongers-hill*. Met Mr. *H.* and went with him to *Peterhouſe*. Cook made us wait thirty-ſix minutes beyond the time. The company, ſome of my *Emanuel* friends. For dinner, a pair of ſoals, a leg of pork and peaſe, among other things. *Mem.* Peaſe-pudding not boiled enough. Cook reprimanded and ſconced *in my preſence*.

Ditto, after dinner. Pain in my ancle returns. Dull all the afternoon. Raillied for being no company. Mr. *H.*'s account of the accommodations on the road in his *Bath* journey.

Ditto, Six. Got into ſpirits. Never was more chatty. We ſat late at whiſt. Mr. *H.* and ſelf agreed at parting to take a gentle ride, and dine at the old houſe on the *London* road to-morrow.

Thurſday, Nine. My ſempſtreſs. She has loſt the meaſure of my wriſt. Forced to be meaſured again. The baggage has got a trick of ſmiling.

Ditto, Ten to Eleven. Made ſome rappee-ſnuff. Read the magazines. Received a preſent of pickles from Miſs *Pilcocks*. *Mem.* To ſend in return ſome collared eel, which I know both the old lady and miſs are fond of.

Ditto, Eleven. Glaſs very high. Mounted at the gate with Mr. *H.* Horſe ſkittiſh, and wants exerciſe. Arrive at the old houſe. All the proviſions beſpoke by ſome rakiſh fellow-commoner in the next room, who had been on a ſcheme to *Newmarket*. Could get nothing but mutton-chops off the worſt end. Port very new. Agree to try ſome other houſe to-morrow.———

Here the Journal breaks off: for the next morning, as my friend informs me, our genial academick was waked with a ſevere fit of the gout; and, at preſent, enjoys all the dignity of that diſeaſe. But I believe we have loſt nothing by this interruption: ſince a continuation of the remainder of the Journal, through the remainder of the week, would moſt *probably* have exhibited nothing more than a re-

peated relation of the ſame circumſtances of *idling* and luxury.

I hope it will not be concluded, from this ſpecimen of academick life, that I have attempted to decry our univerſities. If literature is not the eſſential requiſite of the modern academick, I am yet perſuaded, that *Cambridge* and *Oxford*, however degenerated, ſurpaſs the faſhionable *academies* of our metropolis, and the *gymnaſia* of foreign countries. The number of learned perſons in theſe celebrated ſeats is ſtill conſiderable, and more conveniences and opportunities for ſtudy ſtill ſubſiſt in them, than in any other place. There is at leaſt one very powerful incentive to learning; I mean the GENIUS *of the place*. It is a ſort of inſpiring deity, which every youth of quick ſenſibility and ingenuous diſpoſition creates to himſelf, by reflecting, that he is placed under thoſe venerable walls, where a HOOKER and a HAMMOND, a BACON and a NEWTON, once purſued the ſame courſe of ſcience, and from whence they ſoared to the moſt elevated heights of literary fame. This is that incitement which *Tully*, according to his own teſtimony, experienced at *Athens*, when he contemplated the porticos where *Socrates* ſat, and the laurel-groves where *Plato* diſputed. But there are other circumſtances, and of the higheſt importance, which render our colleges ſuperior to all other places of education. Their inſtitutions, although ſomewhat fallen from their primæval ſimplicity, are ſuch as influence, in a particular manner, the moral conduct of their youth; and in this general depravity of manners and laxity of principles, pure religion is no where more ſtrongly inculcated. The *academies*, as

they are preſumptuouſly ſtyled, are too low to be mentioned; and foreign ſeminaries are likely to prejudice the unwary mind with Calviniſm. But *Engliſh* univerſities render their ſtudents virtuous, at leaſt by excluding all opportunities of vice; and, by teaching them the principles of the *Church of England*, confirm them in thoſe of true chriſtianity.

NUMB. 34. SATURDAY, *December* 9, 1758

TO illuſtrate one thing by its reſemblance to another, has been always the moſt popular and efficacious art of inſtruction. There is indeed no other method of teaching that of which any one is ignorant but by means of ſomething already known; and a mind ſo enlarged by contemplation and inquiry, that it has always many objects within its view, will ſeldom be long without ſome near and familiar image through which an eaſy tranſition may be made to truths more diſtant and obſcure.

Of the parallels which have been drawn by wit and curioſity, ſome are literal and real, as between poetry and painting, two arts which purſue the ſame end, by the operation of the ſame mental faculties, and which differ only as the one repreſents things by marks permanent and natural, the other by ſigns accidental and arbitrary. The one therefore is more eaſily and generally underſtood, ſince ſimilitude in form is immediately perceived; the other is capa-

of conveying more ideas, for men have thought and ſpoken of many things which they do not ſee.

Other parallels are fortuitous and fanciful, yet theſe have ſometimes been extended to many particulars of reſemblance by a lucky concurrence of diligence and chance. The animal *body* is compoſed of many members, united under the direction of one mind; any number of individuals, connected for ſome common purpoſe, is therefore called a body. From this participation of the ſame appellation aroſe the compariſon of the *body* natural and *body* politick, of which, how far ſoever it has been deduced, no end has hitherto been found.

In theſe imaginary ſimilitudes, the ſame word is uſed at once in its primitive and metaphorical ſenſe. Thus health, aſcribed to the body natural, is oppoſed to ſickneſs; but attributed to the body politick ſtands as contrary to adverſity. Theſe parallels therefore have more of genius but leſs of truth; they often pleaſe, but they never convince.

Of this kind is a curious ſpeculation frequently indulged by a philoſopher of my acquaintance, who had diſcovered, that the qualities requiſite to converſation are very exactly repreſented by a bowl of punch.

Punch, ſays this profound inveſtigator, is a liquor compounded of ſpirit and acid juices, ſugar and water. The ſpirit, volatile and fiery, is the proper emblem of vivacity and wit; the acidity of the lemon will very aptly figure pungency of raillery, and acrimony of cenſure; ſugar is the natural repreſentative of luſcious adulation and gentle complaiſance; and water is the proper hieroglyphick of eaſy prattle, inocent and taſteleſs.

Spirit alone is too powerful for uſe. It will produce madneſs rather than merriment; and inſtead of quenching thirſt will inflame the blood. Thus wit, too copiouſly poured out, agitates the hearer with emotions rather violent than pleaſing; every one ſhrinks from the force of its oppreſſion, the company ſits intranced and overpowered; all are aſtoniſhed, but nobody is pleaſed.

The acid juices give this genial liquor all its power of ſtimulating the palate. Converſation would become dull and vapid, if negligence were not ſometimes rouſed, and ſluggiſhneſs quickened, by due ſeverity of reprehenſion. But acids unmixt will diſtort the face and torture the palate; and he that has no other qualities than penetration and aſperity, he whoſe conſtant employment is detection and cenſure, who looks only to find faults, and ſpeaks only to puniſh them, will ſoon be dreaded, hated, and avoided.

The taſte of ſugar is generally pleaſing, but it cannot long be eaten by itſelf. Thus meekneſs and courteſy will always recommend the firſt addreſs, but ſoon pall and nauſeate, unleſs they are aſſociated with more ſprightly qualities. The chief uſe of ſugar is to temper the taſte of other ſubſtances, and ſoftneſs of behaviour in the ſame manner mitigates the roughneſs of contradiction, and allays the bitterneſs of unwelcome truth.

Water is the univerſal vehicle by which are conveyed the particles neceſſary to ſuſtenance and growth, by which thirſt is quenched, and all the wants of life and nature are ſupplied. Thus all the buſineſs of the world is tranſacted by artleſs and eaſy talk, neither ſublimed by fancy, nor diſcoloured by affectation,

ion, without either the harſhneſs of ſatire, or the uſciouſneſs of flattery. By this limpid vein of language, curioſity is gratified, and all the knowledge s conveyed which one man is required to impart for he ſafety or convenience of another. Water is the nly ingredient of punch which can be uſed alone, nd with which man is content till fancy has framed n artificial want. Thus while we only deſire to ave our ignorance informed, we are moſt delighted vith the plaineſt diction; and it is only in the moments of idleneſs or pride, that we call for the gratifications of wit or flattery.

He only will pleaſe long, who, by tempering the cid of ſatire with the ſugar of civility, and allaying he heat of wit with the frigidity of humble chat, an make the true punch of converſation; and as hat punch can be drunk in the greateſt quantity vhich has the largeſt proportion of water, ſo that ompanion will be oftneſt welcome, whoſe talk lows out with inoffenſive copiouſneſs, and unenvied nſipidity.

NUMB. 35. SATURDAY, *December* 16, 1758.

To the IDLER.

Mr. IDLER,

IF it be difficult to perſuade the idle to be buſy, it is likewiſe, as experience has taught me, not eaſy to convince the buſy that it is better to be idle. When you ſhall deſpair of ſtimulating ſluggiſhneſs to motion, I hope you will turn your thoughts towards the means of ſtilling the buſtle of pernicious activity.

I am the unfortunate huſband of a *buyer of bargains*. My wife has ſomewhere heard, that a good houſewife *never* has any thing to *purchaſe when it is wanted*. This maxim is often in her mouth, and always in her head. She is not one of thoſe philoſophical talkers that ſpeculate without practice, and learn ſentences of wiſdom only to repeat them; ſhe is always making additions to her ſtores; ſhe never looks into a broker's ſhop, but ſhe ſpies ſomething that may be wanted ſome time; and it is impoſſible to make her paſs the door of a houſe where ſhe hears *goods ſelling by auction*.

Whatever ſhe thinks cheap, ſhe holds it the duty of an œconomiſt to buy; in conſequence of this maxim, we are incumbered on every ſide with uſeleſs lumber. The ſervants can ſcarcely creep to their beds through the cheſts and boxes that ſurround them. The carpenter is employed once a week

week in building cloſets, fixing cupboards, and faſtening ſhelves, and my houſe has the appearance of a ſhip ſtored for a voyage to the colonies.

I had often obſerved that advertiſements ſet her on fire; and therefore, pretending to emulate her laudable frugality, I forbad the newſpaper to be taken any longer; but my precaution is vain; I know not by what fatality, or by what confederacy, every catalogue of *genuine furniture* comes to her hand, every advertiſement of a warehouſe newly opened is in her pocket-book, and ſhe knows before any of her neighbours when the ſtock of any man *leaving off trade* is to be *ſold cheap for ready money*.

Such intelligence is to my dear-one the Syren's ſong. No engagement, no duty, no intereſt, can withhold her from a ſale, from which ſhe always returns congratulating herſelf upon her dexterity at a bargain; the porter lays down his burthen in the hall, ſhe diſplays her new acquiſitions, and ſpends the reſt of the day in contriving where they ſhall be put.

As ſhe cannot bear to have any thing uncomplete, one purchaſe neceſſitates another; ſhe has twenty feather-beds more than ſhe can uſe, and a late ſale has ſupplied her with a proportionable number of *Whitney* blankets, a large roll of linen for ſheets, and five quilts for every bed, which ſhe bought becauſe the ſeller told her, that if ſhe would clear his hands he would let her have a bargain.

Thus by hourly encroachments my habitation is made narrower and narrower; the dining-room is ſo

crowded

crowded with tables, that dinner ſcarcely can be ſerved; the parlour is decorated with ſo many piles of china, that I dare not ſtep within the door; at every turn of the ſtairs I have a clock, and half the windows of the upper floors are darkened, that ſhelves may be ſet before them.

This, however, might be borne, if ſhe would gratify her own inclinations without oppoſing mine. But I who am idle am luxurious, and ſhe condemns me to live upon ſalt proviſion. She knows the loſs of buying in ſmall quantities, we have therefore whole hogs and quarters of oxen. Part of our meat is tainted before it is eaten, and part is thrown away becauſe it is ſpoiled; but ſhe perſiſts in her ſyſtem, and will never buy any thing by ſingle pennyworths.

The common vice of thoſe who are ſtill graſping at more, is to neglect that which they already poſſeſs; but from this failing my charmer is free. It is the great care of her life that the pieces of beef ſhould be boiled in the order in which they are bought; that the ſecond bag of peaſe ſhould not be opened till the firſt are eaten; that every feather-bed ſhall be lain on in its turn; that the carpets ſhould be taken out of the cheſts once a month and bruſhed, and the rolls of linen opened now and then before the fire. She is daily enquiring after the beſt traps for mice, and keeps the rooms always ſcented by fumigations to deſtroy the moths. She employs workmen, from time to time, to adjuſt ſix clocks that never go, and clean five jacks that ruſt in the garret; and a woman in the next alley lives by ſcouring

ſcouring the braſs and pewter, which are only laid up to tarniſh again.

She is always imagining ſome diſtant time in which ſhe ſhall uſe whatever ſhe accumulates; ſhe has four looking-glaſſes which ſhe cannot hang up in her houſe, but which will be handſome in more lofty rooms; and pays rent for the place of a vaſt copper in ſome warehouſe, becauſe when we live in the country we ſhall brew our own beer.

Of this life I have long been weary, but know not how to change it; all the married men whom I conſult adviſe me to have patience; but ſome old batchelors are of opinion, that ſince ſhe loves ſales ſo well, ſhe ſhould have a ſale of her own; and I have, I think, reſolved to open her hoards, and advertiſe an auction.

I am, SIR,

Your very humble ſervant.

PETER PLENTY.

NUMB. 36. SATURDAY, *December* 23, 1758.

THE great differences that diſturb the peace of mankind are not about ends, but means. We have all the ſame general deſires, but how thoſe deſires ſhall be accompliſhed will for ever be diſputed. The ultimate purpoſe of government is temporal, and that of religion is eternal happineſs. Hitherto we agree; but here we muſt part, to try, according to the endleſs varieties of paſſion and underſtanding combined with one another, every poſſible form of government, and every imaginable tenet of religion.

We are told by *Cumberland*, that *rectitude*, applied to action or contemplation, is merely metaphorical; and that as a *right* line deſcribes the ſhorteſt paſſage from point to point, ſo a *right* action effects a good deſign by the feweſt means; and ſo likewiſe a *right* opinion is that which connects diſtant truths by the ſhorteſt train of intermediate propoſitions.

To find the neareſt way from truth to truth, or from purpoſe to effect, not to uſe more inſtruments where fewer will be ſufficient, not to move by wheels and levers what will give way to the naked hand, is the great proof of a healthful and vigorous mind, neither feeble with helpleſs ignorance, nor overburdened with unwieldy knowledge.

[illegible] there are men who ſeem to think nothing ſo [illegible]ch the characteriſtic of a genius, as to do com[illegible]*things* in an uncommon manner; like *Hudibras*,

to *tell the clock by algebra*; or like the lady in Dr. *Young*'s ſatires, *to drink tea by ſtratagem:* to quit the beaten track only becauſe it is known, and take a new path, however crooked or rough, becauſe the ſtrait was found out before.

Every man ſpeaks and writes with intent to be underſtood, and it can ſeldom happen but he that underſtands himſelf might convey his notions to another; if, content to be underſtood, he did not ſeek to be admired; but when once he begins to contrive how his ſentiments may be received, not with moſt eaſe to his reader, but with moſt advantage to himſelf, he then transfers his conſideration from words to ſounds, from ſentences to periods, and as he grows more elegant becomes leſs intelligible.

It is difficult to enumerate every ſpecies of authors whoſe labours counteract themſelves; the man of exuberance and copiouſneſs, who diffuſes every thought through ſo many diverſities of expreſſion, that it is loſt like water in a miſt; the ponderous dictator of ſentences, whoſe notions are delivered in the lump, and are, like uncoined bullion, of more weight than uſe; the liberal illuſtrator, who ſhews by examples and compariſons what was clearly ſeen when it was firſt propoſed; and the ſtately ſon of demonſtration, who proves with mathematical formality what no man has yet pretended to doubt.

There is a mode of ſtyle for which I know not that the maſters of oratory have yet found a name, a ſtyle by which the moſt evident truths are ſo obſcured, that they can no longer be perceived, and the moſt familiar propoſitions ſo diſguiſed that they cannot be known. Every other kind of eloquence

is the dreſs of ſenſe; but this is the maſk by a true maſter of his art will ſo effectually con that a man will as eaſily miſtake his own pc if he meets them thus transformed, as he m in a maſquerade his neareſt acquaintance.

This ſtyle may be called the *terrifick*, for i intention is to terrify and amaze; it may be the *repulſive*, for its natural effect is to driv the reader; or it may be diſtinguiſhed, ir *Engliſh*, by the denomination of the *bugbear ſt* it has more terror than danger, and will app formidable as it is more nearly approached.

A mother tells her infant, that *two and tw four*; the child remembers the propoſition, able to count four to all the purpoſes of life, courſe of his education brings him among p phers, who fright him from his former know by telling him, that four is a certain aggre units; that all numbers being only the repeti an unit, which, though not a number itſelf, parent, root, or original of all number, *four* denomination aſſigned to a certain number o repetitions. The only danger is, leſt, when hears theſe dreadful ſounds, the pupil ſhoul away; if he has but the courage to ſtay till th cluſion, he will find that, when ſpeculation ha its worſt, two and two ſtill make four.

An illuſtrious example of this ſpecies of eloq may be found in *Letters concerning Mind*. Th thor begins by declaring, that *the ſorts of thin things that now are, have been, and ſhall be, a things that ſtrictly* ARE. In this poſition, exce laſt clauſe, in which he uſes ſomething c

ſcho

ſcholaſtick language, there is nothing but what every man has heard and imagines himſelf to know. But who would not believe that ſome wonderful novelty is preſented to his intellect, when he is afterwards told, in the true *bugbear* ſtyle, that *the* ares, *in the former ſenſe, are things that lie between the* have-beens *and* ſhall-bes. *The* have-beens *are things that are paſt; the* ſhall-bes *are things that are to come; and the things that* ARE, in the latter ſenſe, *are things that have not been, nor ſhall be, nor ſtand in the midſt of ſuch as are before them, or ſhall be after them. The things that have been, and ſhall be, have reſpect to preſent, paſt, and future. Thoſe likewiſe that now* ARE *have moreover place; that, for inſtance, which is here, that which is to the eaſt, that which is to the weſt.*

All this, my dear reader, is very ſtrange; but though it be ſtrange, it is not new; ſurvey theſe wonderful ſentences again, and they will be found to contain nothing more than very plain truths, which till this Author aroſe had always been delivered in plain language.

NUMB. 37. SATURDAY, *December* 30, 1758.

THOSE who are ſkilled in the extraction and preparation of metals, declare, that iron is every where to be found; and that not only its proper ore is copiouſly treaſured in the caverns of the earth, but that its particles are diſperſed throughout all other bodies.

If the extent of the human view could comprehend the whole frame of the univerſe, I believe it would be found invariably true, that Providence has given that in greateſt plenty, which the condition of life makes of greateſt uſe; and that nothing is penuriouſly imparted or placed far from the reach of man, of which a more liberal diſtribution, or more eaſy acquiſition, would increaſe real and rational felicity.

Iron is common, and gold is rare. Iron contributes ſo much to ſupply the wants of nature, that its uſe conſtitutes much of the difference between ſavage and poliſhed life, between the ſtate of him that ſlumbers in *European* palaces, and him that ſhelters himſelf in the cavities of a rock from the chilneſs of the night, or the violence of the ſtorm. Gold can never be hardened into ſaws or axes; it can neither furniſh inſtruments of manufacture, utenſils of agriculture, nor weapons of defence; its only quality is to

ſhine, and the value of its luſtre ariſes from its ſcarcity.

Throughout the whole circle, both of natural and moral life, neceſſaries are as iron, and ſuperfluities as gold. What we really need we may readily obtain; ſo readily, that far the greater part of mankind has, in the wantonneſs of abundance, confounded natural with artificial deſires, and invented neceſſities for the ſake of employment, becauſe the mind is impatient of inaction, and life is ſuſtained with ſo little labour, that the tediouſneſs of idle time cannot otherwiſe be ſupported.

Thus plenty is the original cauſe of many of our needs; and even the poverty, which is ſo frequent and diſtreſsful in civilized nations, proceeds often from that change of manners which opulence has produced. Nature makes us poor only when we want neceſſaries, but cuſtom gives the name of poverty to the want of ſuperfluities.

When Socrates paſſed through ſhops of toys and ornaments, he cried out, *How many things are here which I do not need!* And the ſame exclamation may every man make who ſurveys the common accommodations of life.

Superfluity and difficulty begin together. To dreſs food for the ſtomach is eaſy, the art is to irritate the palate when the ſtomach is ſufficed. A rude hand may build walls, form roofs, and lay floors, and provide all that warmth and ſecurity require; we only call the nicer artificers to carve the cornice, or to paint the cielings. Such dreſs as may enable the body to endure the different ſeaſons, the

moſt unenlightened nations have been able to procure; but the work of ſcience begins in the ambition of diſtinction, in variations of faſhion, and emulation of elegance. Corn grows with eaſy culture; the gardener's experiments are only employed to exalt the flavours of fruits, and brighten the colours of flowers.

Even of knowledge, thoſe parts are moſt eaſy which are generally neceſſary. The intercourſe of ſociety is maintained without the elegances of language. Figures, criticiſms, and refinements, are the work of thoſe whom idleneſs makes weary of themſelves. The commerce of the world is carried on by eaſy methods of computation. Subtilty and ſtudy are required only when queſtions are invented merely to puzzle, and calculations are extended to ſhew the ſkill of the calculator. The light of the ſun is equally beneficial to him, whoſe eyes tell him that it moves, and to him whoſe reaſon perſuades him that it ſtands ſtill; and plants grow with the ſame luxuriance, whether we ſuppoſe earth or water the parent of vegetation.

If we raiſe our thoughts to nobler enquiries, we ſhall ſtill find facility concurring with uſefulneſs. No man needs ſtay to be virtuous till the moraliſts have determined the eſſence of virtue; our duty is made apparent by its proximate conſequences, though the general and ultimate reaſon ſhould never be diſcovered. Religion may regulate the life of h 1 to whom the *Scotiſts* and *Thomiſts* are alike un- 1; and the aſſertors of fate and free-will, how-

ever

ever different in their talk, agree to act in the ſame manner.

It is not my intention to depreciate the politer arts or abſtruſer ſtudies. That curioſity which always ſucceeds eaſe and plenty, was undoubtedly given us as a proof of capacity which our preſent ſtate is not able to fill, as a preparative for ſome better mode of exiſtence, which ſhall furniſh employment for the whole ſoul, and where pleaſure ſhall be adequate to our powers of fruition. In the mean time, let us gratefully acknowledge that goodneſs which grants us eaſe at a cheap rate, which changes the ſeaſons where the nature of heat and cold has not been yet examined, and gives the viciſſitudes of day and night to thoſe who never marked the tropicks, or numbered the conſtellations.

NUMB. 38. SATURDAY, *January* 6, 1759.

SINCE the publication of the letter concerning the condition of thoſe who are confined in gaols by their creditors, an enquiry is ſaid to have been made, by which it appears that more than twenty thouſand * are at this time priſoners for debt.

We often look with indifference on the ſucceſſive parts of that, which, if the whole were ſeen together, would ſhake us with emotion. A debtor is dragged to priſon, pitied for a moment, and then forgotten; another follows him, and is loſt alike in the caverns of oblivion; but when the whole maſs of calamity riſes up at once, when twenty thouſand reaſonable beings are heard all groaning in unneceſſary miſery, not by the infirmity of nature, but the miſtake or negligence of policy, who can forbear to pity and lament, to wonder and abhor?

There is here no need of declamatory vehemence; we live in an age of commerce and computation; let us therefore coolly enquire what is the ſum of evil which the impriſonment of debtors brings upon our country.

It ſeems to be the opinion of the later computiſts, that the inhabitants of *England* do not exceed ſix

* This number was at that time confidently publiſhed; but *the author* has ſince found reaſon to queſtion the calculation.

millions,

millions, of which twenty thouſand is the three-hundredth part. What ſhall we ſay of the humanity or the wiſdom of a nation, that voluntarily ſacrifices one in every three hundred to lingering deſtruction!

The misfortunes of an individual do not extend their influence to many; yet if we conſider the effects of conſanguinity and friendſhip, and the general reciprocation of wants and benefits, which make one man dear or neceſſary to another, it may reaſonably be ſuppoſed, that every man languiſhing in priſon gives trouble of ſome kind to two others who love or need him. By this multiplication of miſery we ſee diſtreſs extended to the hundredth part of the whole ſociety.

If we eſtimate at a ſhilling a day what is loſt by the inaction and conſumed in the ſupport of each man thus chained down to involuntary idleneſs, the publick loſs will riſe in one year to three hundred thouſand pounds; in ten years to more than a ſixth part of our circulating coin.

I am afraid that thoſe who are beſt acquainted with the ſtate of our priſons, will confeſs that my conjecture is too near the truth, when I ſuppoſe that the corroſion of reſentment, the heavineſs of ſorrow, the corruption of confined air, the want of exerciſe, and ſometimes of food, the contagion of diſeaſes, from which there is no retreat, and the ſeverity of tyrants, againſt whom there can be no reſiſtance, and all the complicated horrors of a priſon, put an end every year to the life of one in four of thoſe that are ſhut up from the common comforts of human life.

Thus periſh yearly five thouſand men, overborne with ſorrow, conſumed by famine, or putrified by filth; many of them in the moſt vigorous and uſeful part of life; for the thoughtleſs and imprudent are commonly young, and the active and buſy are ſeldom old.

According to the rule generally received, which ſuppoſes that one in thirty dies yearly, the race of man may be ſaid to be renewed at the end of thirty years. Who would have believed till now, that of every *Engliſh* generation, an hundred and fifty thouſand periſh in our gaols! that in every century, a nation eminent for ſcience, ſtudious of commerce, ambitious of empire, ſhould willingly loſe, in noiſome dungeons, five hundred thouſand of its inhabitants; a number greater than has ever been deſtroyed in the ſame time by the peſtilence and ſword!

A very late occurrence may ſhew us the value of the number which we thus condemn to be uſeleſs; in the re-eſtabliſhment of the trained bands, twenty thouſand are conſidered as a force ſufficient againſt all exigences. While, therefore, we detain twenty thouſand in priſon, we ſhut up in darkneſs and uſeleſſneſs two-thirds of an army which ourſelves judge equal to the defence of our country.

The monaſtick inſtitutions have been often blamed, as tending to retard the increaſe of mankind. And perhaps retirement ought rarely to be permitted, except to thoſe whoſe employment is conſiſtent with abſtraction, and who, though ſolitary, will not be idle; to thoſe whom infirmity makes uſeleſs to the commonwealth, or to thoſe who have paid their due *proportion* to ſociety, and who, having lived for

others,

others, may be honourably diſmiſſed to live for themſelves. But whatever be the evil or the folly of theſe retreats, thoſe have no right to cenſure them whoſe priſons contain greater numbers than the monaſteries of other countries. It is, ſurely, leſs fooliſh and leſs criminal to permit inaction than compel it; to comply with doubtful opinions of happineſs, than condemn to certain and apparent miſery; to indulge the extravagances of erroneous piety, than to multiply and enforce temptations to wickedneſs.

The miſery of gaols is not half their evil: they are filled with every corruption which poverty and wickedneſs can generate between them; with all the ſhameleſs and profligate enormities that can be produced by the impudence of ignominy, the rage of want, and the malignity of deſpair. In a priſon the awe of the publick eye is loſt, and the power of the law is ſpent; there are few fears, there are no bluſhes. The lewd inflame the lewd, the audacious harden the audacious. Every one fortifies himſelf as he can againſt his own ſenſibility, endeavours to practiſe on others the arts which are practiſed on himſelf; and gains the kindneſs of his aſſociates by ſimilitude of manners.

Thus ſome ſink amidſt their miſery, and others ſurvive only to propagate villany. It may be hoped, that our lawgivers will at length take away from us this power of ſtarving and depraving one another: but, if there be any reaſon why this inveterate evil ſhould not be removed in our age, which true policy has enlightened beyond any former time, let thoſe, whoſe writings form the opinions and the practices of their contemporaries, endeavour to

transfer

transfer the reproach of ſuch impriſonment from the debtor to the creditor, till univerſal infamy ſhall purſue the wretch whoſe wantonneſs of power, or revenge of diſappointment, condemns another to torture and to ruin; till he ſhall be hunted through the world as an enemy to man, and find in riches no ſhelter from contempt.

Surely, he whoſe debtor has periſhed in priſon, though he may acquit himſelf of deliberate murder, muſt at leaſt have his mind clouded with diſcontent, when he conſiders how much another has ſuffered from him; when he thinks on the wife bewailing her huſband, or the children begging the bread which their father would have earned. If there are any made ſo obdurate by avarice or cruelty, as to revolve theſe conſequences without dread or pity, I muſt leave them to be awakened by ſome other power, for I write only to human beings.

NUMB. 39. SATURDAY, *January* 13, 1759.

To the IDLER.

SIR,

AS none look more diligently about them than thoſe who have nothing to do, or who do nothing, I ſuppoſe it has not eſcaped your obſervation, that the bracelet, or ornament of great antiquity, has been for ſome years revived among the *Engliſh* ladies.

The genius of our nation is ſaid, I know not for what reaſon, to appear rather in improvement than invention. The bracelet was known in the earlieſt ages; but it was formerly only a hoop of gold, or a cluſter of jewels, and ſhewed nothing but the wealth or vanity of the wearer, till our ladies, by carrying pictures on their wriſts, made their ornaments works of fancy and exerciſes of judgment.

This addition of art to luxury is one of the innumerable proofs that might be given of the late increaſe of female erudition; and I have often congratulated myſelf that my life has happened at a time when thoſe, on whom ſo much of human felicity depends, have learned to think as well as ſpeak, and when reſpect takes poſſeſſion of the ear, while love is entering at the eye.

I have obſerved, that, even by the ſuffrages of their own ſex, thoſe ladies are accounted wiſeſt, who do not yet diſdain to be taught; and therefore I ſhall offer

offer a few hints for the completion of the bracelet, without any dread of the fate of *Orpheus*.

To the ladies who wear the pictures of their huſbands or children, or any other near relations, I can offer nothing more decent or more proper. It is reaſonable to believe that ſhe intends at leaſt to perform her duty, who carries a perpetual excitement to recollection and caution, whoſe own ornaments muſt upbraid her with every failure, and who, by any open violation of her engagements, muſt for ever forfeit her bracelet.

Yet I know not whether it is the intereſt of the huſband to ſolicit very earneſtly a place on the bracelet. If his image be not in the heart, it is of ſmall avail to hang it on the hand. A huſband encircled with diamonds and rubies may gain ſome eſteem, but will never excite love. He that thinks himſelf moſt ſecure of his wife, ſhould be fearful of perſecuting her continually with his preſence. The joy of life is variety; the tendereſt love requires to be rekindled by intervals of abſence; and fidelity herſelf will be wearied with transferring her eye only from the ſame man to the ſame picture.

In many countries the condition of every woman is known by her dreſs. Marriage is rewarded with ſome honourable diſtinction which celibacy is forbidden to uſurp. Some ſuch information a bracelet might afford. The ladies might enroll themſelves in diſtinct claſſes, and carry in open view the emblems of their order. The bracelet of the authoreſs may exhibit the Muſes in a grove of laurel; the houſewife may ſhew *Penelope* with her web; the votreſs of a ſingle life may carry *Urſula* with her troop

of

of virgins; the gameſter may have Fortune with her wheel; and thoſe women that *have no character at all* may diſplay a field of white enamel, as imploring help to fill up the vacuity.

There is a ſet of ladies who have outlived moſt animal pleaſures, and having nothing rational to put in their place, ſolace with cards the loſs of what time has taken away, and the want of what wiſdom, having never been courted, has never given. For theſe I know not how to provide a proper decoration. They cannot be numbered among the gameſters, for though they are always at play they play for nothing, and never riſe to the dignity of hazard or the reputation of ſkill. They neither love nor are loved, and cannot be ſuppoſed to contemplate any human image with delight. Yet though they deſpair to pleaſe, they always wiſh to be fine, and therefore cannot be without a bracelet. To this ſiſterhood I can recommend nothing more likely to pleaſe them than the king of clubs, a perſonage very comely and majeſtick, who will never meet their eyes without reviving the thought of ſome paſt or future party, and who may be diſplayed in the act of dealing with grace and propriety.

But the bracelet which might be moſt eaſily introduced into general uſe is a ſmall convex mirror, in which the lady may ſee herſelf whenever ſhe ſhall lift her hand. This will be a perpetual ſource of delight. Other ornaments are of uſe only in publick, but this will furniſh gratifications to ſolitude. This will ſhew a face that muſt always pleaſe; ſhe who is followed by admirers will carry about her a perpetual juſtification of the publick voice; and ſhe

who

who paſſes without notice may appeal from prejudice to her own eyes.

But I know not why the privilege of the bracelet ſhould be confined to women; it was in former ages worn by heroes in battle; and as modern ſoldiers are always diſtinguiſhed by ſplendour of dreſs, I ſhould rejoice to ſee the bracelet added to the cockade.

In hope of this ornamental innovation, I have ſpent ſome thoughts upon military bracelets. There is no paſſion more heroick than love; and therefore I ſhould be glad to ſee the ſons of *England* marching in the field, every man with the picture of a woman of honour bound upon his hand. But ſince in the army, as every where elſe, there will always be men who love nobody but themſelves, or whom no woman of honour will permit to love her, there is a neceſſity of ſome other diſtinctions and devices.

I have read of a prince who, having loſt a town, ordered the name of it to be every morning ſhouted in his ear till it ſhould be recovered. For the ſame purpoſe I think the proſpect of *Minorca* might be properly worn on the hands of ſome of our generals: others might delight their countrymen, and dignify themſelves with a view of *Rochfort* as it appeared to them at ſea: and thoſe that ſhall return from the conqueſt of *America*, may exhibit the warehouſe of *Frontenac*, with an inſcription denoting, that it was taken in leſs than three years by leſs than twenty thouſand men.

I am, SIR, &c.

TOM TOY.

NUMB. 40. SATURDAY, *January* 20, 1759.

THE practice of appending to the narratives of publick tranſactions more minute and domeſtick intelligence, and filling the newſpapers with advertiſements, has grown up by ſlow degrees to its preſent ſtate.

Genius is ſhewn only by invention. The man who firſt took advantage of the general curioſity that was excited by a ſiege or battle, to betray the readers of news into the knowledge of the ſhop where the beſt puffs and powder were to be ſold, was undoubtedly a man of great ſagacity, and profound ſkill in the nature of man. But when he had once ſhewn the way, it was eaſy to follow him; and every man now knows a ready method of informing the publick of all that he deſires to buy or ſell, whether his wares be material or intellectual; whether he makes clothes, or teaches the mathematicks; whether he be a tutor that wants a pupil, or a pupil that wants a tutor.

Whatever is common is deſpiſed. Advertiſements are now ſo numerous that they are very negligently peruſed, and it is therefore become neceſſary to gain attention by magnificence of promiſes, and by eloquence ſometimes ſublime and ſometimes pathetick.

Promiſe, large promiſe, is the ſoul of an advertiſement. I remember a *waſh-ball* that had a quality truly wonderful—it gave *an exquiſite edge to the razor*. And there are now to be ſold, *for ready money only*, ſome *duvets for bed-coverings, of down, beyond com-*

pariſon

pariſon ſuperior to what is called otter-down, and indeed ſuch, that its *many excellencies cannot be here ſet forth*. With one excellence we are made acquainted—*it is warmer than four or five blankets, and lighter than one.*

There are ſome, however, that know the prejudice of mankind in favour of modeſt ſincerity. The vender of the *beautifying fluid* ſells a lotion that repels pimples, waſhes away freckles, ſmooths the ſkin, and plumps the fleſh; and yet, with a generous abhorrence of oſtentation, confeſſes, that it will not *reſtore the bloom of fifteen to a lady of fifty*.

The true pathos of advertiſements muſt have ſunk deep into the heart of every man that remembers the zeal ſhewn by the ſeller of the *anodyne necklace*, for the eaſe and ſafety *of poor toothing infants*, and the affection with which he warned every mother, that *ſhe would never forgive herſelf* if her infant ſhould periſh without a necklace.

I cannot but remark to the celebrated author who gave, in his notifications of the camel and dromedary, ſo many ſpecimens of the genuine ſublime, that there is now arrived another ſubject yet more worthy of his pen. *A famous Mohawk Indian warrior, who took* Dieſkaw *the French general priſoner, dreſſed in the ſame manner with the native Indians when they go to war, with his face and body painted, with his ſcalping-knife, tom-ax, and all other implements of war: a ſight worthy the curioſity of every true Briton!* This is a very powerful deſcription; but a critick of great refinement would ſay, that it conveys rather *horror* and *terror*. An *Indian*, dreſſed as he goes to war, may bring company together; but if he carries the ſcalp-

ing knife and tom-ax, there are many true Britons that will never be perſuaded to ſee him but through a grate.

It has been remarked by the ſeverer judges, that the ſalutary ſorrow of tragick ſcenes is too ſoon effaced by the merriment of the epilogue; the ſame inconvenience ariſes from the improper diſpoſition of advertiſements. The nobleſt objects may be ſo aſſociated as to be made ridiculous. The camel and dromedary themſelves might have loſt much of their dignity between *the true flower of muſtard* and *the original Daffy's elixir*; and I could not but feel ſome indignation when I found this illuſtrious *Indian* warrior immediately ſucceeded by *a freſh parcel of Dublin butter*.

The trade of advertiſing is now ſo near to perfection, that it is not eaſy to propoſe any improvement. But as every art ought to be exerciſed in due ſubordination to the publick good, I cannot but propoſe it as a moral queſtion to theſe maſters of the publick ear, Whether they do not ſometimes play too wantonly with our paſſions, as when the regiſtrar of lottery tickets invites us to his ſhop by an account of the prize which he ſold laſt year; and whether the advertiſing controvertiſts do not indulge aſperity of language without any adequate provocation; as in the diſpute about *ſtraps for razors*, now happily ſubſided, and in the altercation which at preſent ſubſiſts concerning *eau de luce*.

In an advertiſement it is allowed to every man to ſpeak well of himſelf, but I know not why he ſhould aſſume the privilege of cenſuring his neighbour. He

may proclaim his own virtue or ſkill, but ought not to exclude others from the ſame pretenſions.

Every man that advertiſes his own excellence, ſhould write with ſome conſciouſneſs of a character which dares to call the attention of the publick. He ſhould remember that his name is to ſtand in the ſame paper with thoſe of the king of *Pruſſia* and the emperor of *Germany*, and endeavour to make himſelf worthy of ſuch aſſociation.

Some regard is likewiſe to be paid to poſterity. There are men of diligence and curioſity who treaſure up the papers of the day merely becauſe others neglect them, and in time they will be ſcarce. When theſe collections ſhall be read in another century, how will numberleſs contradictions be reconciled? and how ſhall fame be poſſibly diſtributed among the taylors and boddice-makers of the preſent age?

Surely theſe things deſerve conſideration. It is enough for me to have hinted my deſire that theſe abuſes may be rectified; but ſuch is the ſtate of nature, that what all have the right of doing, many will attempt without ſufficient care or due qualifications.

NUMB. 41. SATURDAY, *January* 27, 1759.

THE following letter relates to an affliction perhaps not neceſſary to be imparted to the publick; but I could not perſuade myſelf to ſuppreſs it, becauſe I think I know the ſentiments to be ſincere, and I feel no diſpoſition to provide for this day any other entertainment.

At tu quiſquis eris, miſeri qui cruda poetæ
Crèdideris fletu funera digna tuo,
Hæc poſtrema tibi ſit flendi cauſa, ſinatque
Lenis inoffenſo vitaque morſque gradu.

Mr. IDLER,

NOTWITHSTANDING the warnings of philoſophers, and the daily examples of loſſes and misfortunes which life forces upon our obſervation, ſuch is the abſorption of our thoughts in the buſineſs of the preſent day, ſuch the reſignation of our reaſon to empty hopes of future felicity, or ſuch our unwillingneſs to foreſee what we dread, that every calamity comes ſuddenly upon us, and not only preſſes us as a burthen, but cruſhes as a blow.

There are evils which happen out of the common courſe of nature, againſt which it is no reproach not to be provided. A flaſh of lightning intercepts the traveller in his way. The concuſſion of an earthquake heaps the ruins of cities upon their inhabitants. But other miſeries time brings, though ſilently

yet viſibly, forward by its even lapſe, which yet approach us unſeen becauſe we turn our eyes away, and ſeize us unreſiſted becauſe we could not arm ourſelves againſt them, but by ſetting them before us.

That it is vain to ſhrink from what cannot be avoided, and to hide that from ourſelves which muſt ſome time be found, is a truth which we all know, but which all neglect, and perhaps none more than the ſpeculative reaſoner, whoſe thoughts are always from home, whoſe eye wanders over life, whoſe fancy dances after meteors of happineſs kindled by itſelf, and who examines every thing rather than his own ſtate.

Nothing is more evident than that the decays of age muſt terminate in death; yet there is no man, ſays *Tully*, who does not believe that he may yet live another year; and there is none who does not, upon the ſame principle, hope another year for his parent or his friend: but the fallacy will be in time detected; the laſt year, the laſt day muſt come. It has come, and is paſt. The life which made my own life pleaſant is at an end, and the gates of death are ſhut upon my proſpects.

The loſs of a friend upon whom the heart was fixed, to whom every wiſh and endeavour tended, is a ſtate of dreary deſolation in which the mind looks abroad impatient of itſelf, and finds nothing but emptineſs and horror. The blameleſs life, the artleſs tenderneſs, the pious ſimplicity, the modeſt reſignation, the patient ſickneſs, and the quiet death, are remembered only to add value to the loſs, to aggravate regret for what cannot be amended, to deepen ſorrow for what cannot be recalled.

Theſe are the calamities by which Providence gradually diſengages us from the love of life. Other evils, fortitude may repel, or hope may mitigate; but irreparable privation leaves nothing to exerciſe reſolution or flatter expectation. The dead cannot return, and nothing is left us here but languiſhment and grief.

Yet ſuch is the courſe of nature, that whoever lives long muſt outlive thoſe whom he loves and honours. Such is the condition of our preſent exiſtence, that life muſt one time loſe its aſſociations, and every inhabitant of the earth muſt walk downward to the grave alone and unregarded, without any partner of his joy or grief, without any intereſted witneſs of his misfortunes or ſucceſs.

Misfortune, indeed, he may yet feel; for where is the bottom of the miſery of man? But what is ſucceſs to him that has none to enjoy it? Happineſs is not found in ſelf-contemplation; it is perceived only when it is reflected from another.

We know little of the ſtate of departed ſouls, becauſe ſuch knowledge is not neceſſary to a good life. Reaſon deſerts us at the brink of the grave, and can give no further intelligence. Revelation is not wholly ſilent. *There is joy in the angels of Heaven over one ſinner that repenteth*; and ſurely this joy is not incommunicable to ſouls diſentangled from the body, and made like angels.

Let hope therefore dictate, what revelation does not confute, that the union of ſouls may ſtill remain; and that we who are ſtruggling with ſin, ſorrow, and infirmities, may have our part in the attention and kindneſs of thoſe who have finiſhed their courſe, and are now receiving their reward.

Theſe are the great occaſions which force the mind to take refuge in religion: when we have no help in ourſelves, what can remain but that we look up to a higher and a greater Power? and to what hope may we not raiſe our eyes and hearts, when we conſider that the greateſt POWER is the BEST?

Surely there is no man who, thus afflicted, does not ſeek ſuccour in the *goſpel*, which has brought *life and immortality to light*. The precepts of *Epicurus*, who teaches us to endure what the laws of the univerſe make neceſſary, may ſilence, but not content us. The dictates of *Zeno*, who commands us to look with indifference on external things, may diſpoſe us to conceal our ſorrow, but cannot aſſuage it. Real alleviation of the loſs of friends, and rational tranquillity in the proſpect of our own diſſolution, can be received only from the promiſes of him in whoſe hands are life and death, and from the aſſurance of another and better ſtate, in which all tears will be wiped from the eyes, and the whole ſoul ſhall be filled with joy. Philoſophy may infuſe ſtubbornneſs, but religion only can give patience.

I am, &c.

NUMB. 42. SATURDAY, *February* 3, 1759.

THE ſubject of the following letter is not wholly unmentioned by the RAMBLER. The SPECTATOR has alſo a letter containing a caſe not much different. I hope my correſpondent's performance is more an effort of genius, than effuſion of the paſſions; and that ſhe hath rather attempted to paint ſome poſſible diſtreſs, than really feels the evils which ſhe has deſcribed.

To the IDLER.

SIR,

THERE is a cauſe of miſery, which, though certainly known both to you and your predeceſſors, has been little taken notice of in your papers; I mean the ſnares that the bad behaviour of parents extends over the paths of life which their children are to tread after them; and as I make no doubt but the *Idler* holds the ſhield for virtue, as well as the glaſs for folly, that he will employ his leiſure hours as much to his own ſatisfaction in warning his readers againſt a danger, as in laughing them out of a faſhion: for this reaſon I am tempted to aſk admittance for my ſtory in your paper, though it has nothing to recommend it but truth, and the honeſt wiſh of warning others to ſhun the track which I am afraid may lead me at laſt to ruin.

I am the child of a father, who, having always lived in one ſpot in the country where he was born, and having had no genteel education himſelf, thought no qualifications in the world deſireable but as they led up to fortune, and no learning neceſſary to happineſs but ſuch as might moſt effectually teach me to make the beſt market of myſelf: I was unfortunately born a beauty, to a full ſenſe of which my father took care to flatter me; and having, when very young, put me to a ſchool in the country, afterwards tranſplanted me to another in town, at the inſtigation of his friends, where his ill-judged fondneſs let me remain no longer than to learn juſt enough experience to convince me of the ſordidneſs of his views, to give me an idea of perfections which my preſent ſituation will never ſuffer me to reach, and to teach me ſufficient morals to dare to deſpiſe what is bad, though it be in a father.

Thus equipped (as he thought completely) for life, I was carried back into the country, and lived with him and my mother in a ſmall village, within a few miles of the county-town; where I mixed, at firſt with reluctance, among company which, though I never deſpiſed, I could not approve, as they were brought up with other inclinations, and narrower views than my own. My father took great pains to ſhew me every where, both at his own houſe, and at ſuch publick diverſions as the country afforded: he frequently told the people all he had was for his daughter; took care to repeat the civilities I had received from all his friends in *London*; told how much I was admired, and

and all his little ambition could ſuggeſt to ſet me in a ſtronger light.

Thus have I continued tricked out for ſale, as I may call it, and doomed, by parental authority, to a ſtate little better than that of proſtitution. I look on myſelf as growing cheaper every hour, and am loſing all that honeſt pride, that modeſt confidence, in which the virgin dignity conſiſts. Nor does my misfortune ſtop here: though many would be too generous to impute the follies of a father to a child whoſe heart has ſet her above them; yet I am afraid the moſt charitable of them will hardly think it poſſible for me to be a daily ſpectatreſs of his vices without tacitly allowing them, and at laſt conſenting to them, as the eye of the frighted infant is, by degrees, reconciled to the darkneſs of which at firſt it was afraid. It is a common opinion, he himſelf muſt very well know, that vices, like diſeaſes, are often hereditary; and that the property of the one is to infect the manners, as the other poiſons the ſprings of life.

Yet this, though bad, is not the worſt; my father deceives himſelf the hopes of the very child he has brought into the world; he ſuffers his houſe to be the ſeat of drunkenneſs, riot, and irreligion: who ſeduces, almoſt in my ſight, the menial ſervant, converſes, with the proſtitute, and corrupts the wife! Thus I, who from my earlieſt dawn of reaſon was taught to think that at my approach every eye ſparkled with pleaſure, or was dejected as conſcious of ſuperior charms, am excluded from ſociety, through fear leſt I ſhould partake, if not of my father's crimes, at leaſt of his reproach. Is a

parent,

parent, who is ſo little ſolicitous for the welfare of a child, better than a pirate who turns a wretch adrift in a boat at ſea, without a ſtar to ſteer by, or an anchor to hold it faſt? Am I not to lay all my miſeries at thoſe doors which ought to have opened only for my protection? And if doomed to add at laſt one more to the number of thoſe wretches whom neither the world nor its law befriends, may I not juſtly ſay that I have been awed by a parent into ruin? But though a parent's power is ſcreened from inſult and violation by the very words of heaven, yet ſurely no laws, divine or human, forbid me to remove myſelf from the malignant ſhade of a plant that poiſons all around it, blaſts the bloom of youth, checks its improvements, and makes all its flowrets fade: but to whom can the wretched, can the dependant fly? For me to fly a father's houſe, is to be a beggar: I have only one comforter amidſt my anxieties, a pious relation, who bids me appeal to heaven for a witneſs to my juſt intentions, fly as a deſerted wretch to its protection; and, being aſked who my father is, point, like the antient philoſopher, with my finger to the heavens.

The hope in which I write this, is, that you will give it a place in your paper; and as your eſſays ſometimes find their way into the country, that my father may read my ſtory there; and, if not for his own ſake, yet for mine, ſpare to perpetuate that worſt of calamities to me, the loſs of character, from which all his diſſimulation has not been able to reſcue himſelf. Tell the world, Sir, that it is poſſible for virtue to keep its throne unſhaken with-

out any other guard than itſelf; that it is poſſible to maintain that purity of thought ſo neceſſary to the completion of human excellence even in the midſt of temptations; when they have no friend within, nor are aſſiſted by the voluntary indulgence of vicious thoughts.

If the inſertion of a ſtory like this does not break in on the plan of your paper, you have it in your power to be a better friend than her father to

PERDITA.

NUMB. 43. SATURDAY, *February* 10, 1759.

THE natural advantages which ariſe from the poſition of the earth which we inhabit with reſpect to the other planets, afford much employment to mathematical ſpeculation, by which it has been diſcovered, that no other conformation of the ſyſtem could have given ſuch commodious diſtributions of light and heat, or imparted fertility and pleaſure to ſo great a part of a revolving ſphere.

It may be perhaps obſerved by the moraliſt, with equal reaſon, that our globe ſeems particularly fitted for the reſidence of a being, placed here only for a ſhort time, whoſe taſk is to advance himſelf to a higher and happier ſtate of exiſtence, by unremitted vigilance of caution, and activity of virtue.

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The duties required of man are ſuch as human nature does not willingly perform, and ſuch as thoſe are inclined to delay who yet intend ſome time to fulfil them. It was therefore neceſſary that this univerſal reluctance ſhould be counteracted, and the drowſineſs of heſitation wakened into reſolve; that the danger of procraſtination ſhould be always in view, and the fallacies of ſecurity be hourly detected.

To this end all the appearances of nature uniformly conſpire. Whatever we ſee on every ſide, reminds us of the lapſe of time and the flux of life. The day and night ſucceed each other, the rotation of ſeaſons diverſifies the year, the ſun riſes, attains the meridian, declines and ſets; and the moon every night changes its form.

The day has been conſidered as an image of the year, and the year as the repreſentation of life. The morning anſwers to the ſpring, and the ſpring to childhood and youth; the noon correſponds to the ſummer, and the ſummer to the ſtrength of manhood. The evening is an emblem of autumn, and autumn of declining life. The night with its ſilence and darkneſs ſhews the winter, in which all the powers of vegetation are benumbed; and the winter points out the time when life ſhall ceaſe, with its hopes and pleaſures.

He that is carried forward, however ſwiftly, by a motion equable and eaſy, perceives not the change of place but by the variation of objects. If the wheel of life, which rolls thus ſilently along, pro ed on through undiſtinguiſhable uniformity, we *ould never* mark its approaches to the end of

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the courſe. If one hour were like another; if the paſſage of the ſun did not ſhew that the day is waſting; if the change of ſeaſons did not impreſs upon us the flight of the year; quantities of duration equal to days and years would glide unobſerved. If the parts of time were not variouſly coloured, we ſhould never diſcern their departure or ſucceſſion, but ſhould live thoughtleſs of the paſt, and careleſs of the future, without will, and perhaps without power to compute the periods of life, or to compare the time which is already loſt with that which may probably remain.

But the courſe of time is ſo viſibly marked, that it is obſerved even by the birds of paſſage, and by nations who have raiſed their minds very little above animal inſtinct: there are human beings whoſe language does not ſupply them with words by which they can number five, but I have read of none that have not names for day and night, for ſummer and winter.

Yet it is certain that theſe admonitions of nature, however forcible, however importunate, are too often vain; and that many who mark with ſuch accuracy the courſe of time, appear to have little ſenſibility of the decline of life. Every man has ſomething to do which he neglects; every man has faults to conquer which he delays to combat.

So little do we accuſtom ourſelves to conſider the effects of time, that things neceſſary and certain often ſurpriſe us like unexpected contingencies. We leave the beauty in her bloom, and, after an abſence of twenty years, wonder, at our return, to find her faded. We meet thoſe whom we left children,

children, and can ſcarcely perſuade ourſelves to treat them as men. The traveller viſits in age thoſe countries through which he rambled in his youth, and hopes for merriment at the old place. The man of buſineſs, wearied with unſatisfactory proſperity, retires to the town of his nativity, and expects to play away the laſt years with the companions of his childhood, and recover youth in the fields where he once was young.

From this inattention, ſo general and ſo miſchievous, let it be every man's ſtudy to exempt himſelf. Let him that deſires to ſee others happy, make haſte to give while his gift can be enjoyed, and remember that every moment of delay takes away ſomething from the value of his benefaction. And let him who purpoſes his own happineſs, reflect, that while he forms his purpoſe the day rolls on, and *the night cometh when no man can work.*

NUMB. 44. SATURDAY, *February* 17, 1759.

MEMORY is, among the faculties of the human mind, that of which we make the moſt frequent uſe, or rather that of which the agency is inceſſant or perpetual. Memory is the primary and fundamental power, without which there could be no other intellectual operation. Judgment and ratiocination ſuppoſe ſomething already known, and draw their deciſions only from experience. Imagination ſelects ideas from the treaſures of remembrance, and produces novelty only by varied combinations. We do not even form conjectures of diſtant, or anticipations of future events, but by concluding what is poſſible from what is paſt.

The two offices of memory are collection and diſtribution; by one images are accumulated, and by the other produced for uſe. Collection is always the employment of our firſt years, and diſtribution commonly that of our advanced age.

To collect and repoſite the various forms of things, is far the moſt pleaſing part of mental occupation. We are naturally delighted with novelty, and there is a time when all that we ſee is new. When firſt we enter into the world, whitherſoever we turn our eyes, they meet knowledge with pleaſure at her ſide; every diverſity of nature pours ideas in upon the ſoul; neither ſearch nor labour are neceſſary; we have nothing more to do than to open our eyes, and curioſity is gratified.

Much of the pleaſure which the firſt ſur
the world affords, is exhauſted before we are
ous of our own felicity, or able to compa
condition with ſome other poſſible ſtate. W
therefore few traces of the joy of our earlieſt
veries; yet we all remember a time when nat
ſo many untaſted gratifications, that every ex
gave delight which can now be found no
when the noiſe of a torrent, the ruſtle of a
the ſong of birds, or the play of lambs, had
to fill the attention, and ſuſpend all percep
the courſe of time.

But theſe eaſy pleaſures are ſoon at an en
have ſeen in a very little time ſo much, that
out for new objects of obſervation, and end
to find variety in books and life. But ſt
laborious, and not always ſatisfactory; and c
ſation has its pains as well as pleaſures;
willing to learn, but not willing to be taug
are pained by ignorance, but pained yet m
another's knowledge.

From the vexation of pupillage men com
ſet themſelves free about the middle of l
ſhutting up the avenues of intelligence, and
ing to reſt in their preſent ſtate; and they,
ardour of enquiry continues longer, find ther
inſenſibly forſaken by their inſtructors. As
man advances in life, the proportion betwee
that are younger, and that are older than h
is continually changing; and he that has liv
a century, finds few that do not require fro
tl information which he once expected fron
nt before him.

Then it is that the magazines of memory are opened, and the ſtores of accumulated knowledge are diſplayed by vanity or benevolence, or in honeſt commerce of mutual intereſt. Every man wants others, and is therefore glad when he is wanted by them. And as few men will endure the labour of intenſe meditation without neceſſity, he that has learned enough for his profit or his honour, ſeldom endeavours after further acquiſitions.

The pleaſure of recollecting ſpeculative notions would not be much leſs than that of gaining them, if they could be kept pure and unmingled with the paſſages of life; but ſuch is the neceſſary concatenation of our thoughts, that good and evil are linked together, and no pleaſure recurs but aſſociated with pain. Every revived idea reminds us of a time when ſomething was enjoyed that is now loſt, when ſome hope was not yet blaſted, when ſome purpoſe had yet not languiſhed into ſluggiſhneſs or indifference.

Whether it be that life has more vexations than comforts, or, what is in the event juſt the ſame, that evil makes deeper impreſſion than good, it is certain that few can review the time paſt without heavineſs of heart. He remembers many calamities incurred by folly, many opportunities loſt by negligence. The ſhades of the dead riſe up before him; and he laments the companions of his youth, the partners of his amuſements, the aſſiſtants of his labours, whom the hand of death has ſnatched away.

When an offer was made to *Themiſtocles* of teaching him the art of memory, he anſwered, that he

would rather wiſh for the art of forgetfulneſs. He felt his imagination haunted by phantoms of miſery which he was unable to ſuppreſs, and would gladly have calmed his thoughts with ſome *oblivious antidote*. In this we all reſemble one another; the hero and the ſage are, like vulgar mortals, overburthened by the weight of life, all ſhrink from recollection, and all wiſh for an art of forgetfulneſs.

NUMB. 45. SATURDAY, *February* 24, 1759.

THERE is in many minds a kind of vanity exerted to the diſadvantage of themſelves; a deſire to be praiſed for ſuperior acuteneſs diſcovered only in the degradation of their ſpecies, or cenſure of their country.

Defamation is ſufficiently copious. The general lampooner of mankind may find long exerciſe for his zeal or wit in the defects of nature, the vexations of life, the follies of opinion, and the corruptions of practice. But fiction is eaſier than diſcernment; and moſt of theſe writers ſpare themſelves the labour of enquiry, and exhauſt their virulence upon imaginary crimes, which, as they never exiſted, can never be amended.

That the painters find no encouragement among the *Engliſh* for many other works than portraits, has been imputed to national ſelfiſhneſs. 'Tis vain, ſays the ſatiriſt, to ſet before any *Engliſhman* the

ſcenes

of landſcape, or the heroes of hiſtory; nature
ıtiquity are nothing in his eye; he has no va-
ıt for himſelf, nor deſires any copy but of his
ırm.

oever is delighted with his own picture muſt
his pleaſure from the pleaſure of another.
man is always preſent to himſelf, and has,
ɔre, little need of his own reſemblance, nor
ɛſire it, but for the ſake of thoſe whom he
and by whom he hopes to be remembered.
ıſe of the art is a natural and reaſonable con-
ıce of affection; and though, like other hu-
ctions, it is often complicated with pride, yet
ſuch pride is more laudable, than that by
palaces are covered with pictures, that, how-
ĸcellent, neither imply the owner's virtue nor
it.

ius is chiefly exerted in hiſtorical pictures,
e art of the painter of portraits is often loſt in
ſcurity of his ſubject. But it is in painting as
; what is greateſt is not always beſt. I ſhould
to ſee *Reynolds* transfer to heroes and to god-
to empty ſplendor and to airy fiction, that art
is now employed in diffuſing friendſhip, in
ıg tenderneſs, in quickening the affections of
ſent, and continuing the preſence of the dead.
in a nation great and opulent there is room,
ught to be patronage, for an art like that of
ıg through all its diverſities; and it is to be
, that the reward now offered for an hiſtorical
: may excite an honeſt emulation, and give
ıing to an *Engliſh* ſchool.

It is not very eaſy to find an action or event that can be efficaciouſly repreſented by a painter.

He muſt have an action not ſucceſſive but inſtantaneous; for the time of a picture is a ſingle moment. For this reaſon, the death of *Hercules* cannot well be painted, though at the firſt view it flatters the imagination with very glittering ideas: the gloomy mountain, overhanging the ſea, and covered with trees, ſome bending to the wind, and ſome torn from their roots by the raging hero; the violence with which he rends from his ſhoulders the invenomed garment; the propriety with which his muſcular nakedneſs may be diſplayed; the death of *Lycas* whirled from the promontory; the gigantic preſence of *Philoctetes*; the blaze of the fatal pile, which the deities behold with grief and terror from the ſky.

All theſe images fill the mind, but will not compoſe a picture, becauſe they cannot be united in a ſingle moment. *Hercules* muſt have rent his fleſh at one time, and toſſed *Lycas* into the air at another; he muſt firſt tear up the trees, and then lie down upon tee pile.

The action muſt be circumſtantial and diſtinct. There is a paſſage in the Iliad which cannot be read without ſtrong emotions. A *Trojan* prince, ſeized by *Achilles* in the battle, falls at his feet, and in moving terms ſupplicates for life. *How can a wretch like thee*, ſays the haughty *Greek*, *entreat to live, when thou knoweſt that the time muſt come when Achilles is to die?* This cannot be painted, becauſe no peculiarity of attitude or diſpoſition can ſo ſup-

ply the place of language as to impreſs the ſentiment.

The event painted muſt be ſuch as excites paſſion, and different paſſions in the ſeveral actors, or a tumult of contending paſſions in the chief.

Perhaps the diſcovery of *Ulyſſes* by his nurſe is of this kind. The ſurprize of the nurſe mingled with joy; that of *Ulyſſes* checked by prudence, and clouded by ſolicitude; and the diſtinctneſs of the action by which the ſcar is found; all concur to complete the ſubject. But the pictures, having only two figures, will want variety.

A much nobler aſſemblage may be furniſhed by the death of *Epaminondas*. The mixture of gladneſs and grief in the face of the meſſenger who brings his dying general an account of the victory; the various paſſions of the attendants; the ſublimity of compoſure in the hero, while the dart is by his own command drawn from his ſide, and the faint gleam of ſatisfaction that diffuſes itſelf over the languor of death; are worthy of that pencil which yet I do not wiſh to ſee employed upon them.

If the deſign were not too multifarious and extenſive, I ſhould wiſh that our painters would attempt the diſſolution of the parliament by *Cromwell*. The point of time may be choſen when *Cromwell*, looking round the Pandæmonium with contempt, ordered the bauble to be taken away; and *Harriſon* laid hands on the ſpeaker to drag him from the chair.

The various appearances, which rage, and terror, and aſtoniſhment, and guilt, might exhibit in the faces of the hateful aſſembly, of whom the prin-

cipal perſons may be faithfully drawn from portraits or prints; the irreſolute repugnance of ſome, the hypocritical ſubmiſſions of others, the ferocious inſolence of *Cromwell*, the rugged brutality of *Harriſon*, and the general trepidation of fear and wickedneſs, would, if ſome proper diſpoſition could be contrived, make a picture of unexampled variety, and irreſiſtible inſtruction.

NUMB. 46. SATURDAY, *March* 3, 1759.

Mr. IDLER,

I AM encouraged, by the notice you have taken of *Betty Broom*, to repreſent the miſeries which I ſuffer from a ſpecies of tyranny which, I believe, is not very uncommon, though perhaps it may have eſcaped the obſervation of thoſe who converſe little with fine ladies, or ſee them only in their publick characters.

To this method of venting my vexation I am the more inclined, becauſe if I do not complain to you, I muſt burſt in ſilence; for my miſtreſs has teazed me and teazed me till I can hold no longer, and yet I muſt not tell her of her tricks. The girls that live in comm[illegible] ſervices can quarrel, and give warning, and find [illegible]er places; but we that live with great ladies, if [illegible]o [illegible]e offend them, have nothing left but to re[illegible] the country.

I [illegible]n [illegible]it maid to a lady who keeps the beſt [illegible], is ſeen at every place of faſhionable reſort.

reſort. I am envied by all the maids in the ſquare, for few counteſſes leave off ſo many clothes as my miſtreſs, and nobody ſhares with me: ſo that I ſupply two families in the country with finery for the aſſizes and horſe-races, beſides what I wear myſelf. The ſteward and houſe-keeper have joined againſt me to procure my removal, that they may advance a relation of their own; but their deſigns are found out by my lady, who ſays I need not fear them, for ſhe will never have dowdies about her.

You would think, Mr. *Idler*, like others, that I am very happy, and may well be contented with my lot. But I will tell you. My lady has an odd humour. She never orders any thing in direct words, for ſhe loves a ſharp girl that can take a hint.

I would not have you ſuſpect that ſhe has any thing to hint which ſhe is aſhamed to ſpeak at length, for none can have greater purity of ſentiment, or rectitude of intention. She has nothing to hide, yet nothing will ſhe tell. She always gives her directions obliquely and alluſively, by the mention of ſomething relative or conſequential, without any other purpoſe than to exerciſe my acuteneſs and her own.

It is impoſſible to give a notion of this ſtyle otherwiſe than by examples. One night, when ſhe had ſet writing letters till it was time to be dreſſed, *Molly*, ſaid ſhe, *the Ladies are all to be at Court to-night in white aprons.* When ſhe means that I ſhould ſend to order the chair, ſhe ſays, *I think the ſtreets are clean, I may venture to walk.* When ſhe would have ſomething put into its place, ſhe bids me *lay it on the floor.* If ſhe would have me ſnuff

the candles, ſhe aſks *whether I think her eyes are like a cat's?* If ſhe thinks her chocolate delayed, ſhe talks of *the benefit of abſtinence.* If any needle-work is forgotten, ſhe ſuppoſes *that I have heard of the lady who died by pricking her finger.*

She always imagines that I can recall every thing paſt from a ſingle word. If ſhe wants her head from the milliner, ſhe only ſays, *Molly, you know Mrs. Tape.* If ſhe would have the mantua-maker ſent for, ſhe remarks *that Mr. Taffaty, the mercer, was here laſt week.* She ordered, a fortnight ago, that the firſt time ſhe was abroad all day I ſhould chuſe her a new ſett of coffee-cups at the china-ſhop: of this ſhe reminded me yeſterday, as ſhe was going down ſtairs, by ſaying, *You can't find your way now to Pall-mall.*

All this would never vex me, if, by encreaſing my trouble, ſhe ſpared her own; but, dear Mr. *Idler*, is it not as eaſy to ſay *coffee-cups*, as *Pall-mall*, and to tell me in plain words what I am to do, and when it is to be done, as to torment her own head with the labour of finding hints, and mine with that of underſtanding them?

When firſt I came to this lady, I had nothing like the learning that I have now; for ſhe has many books, and I have much time to read; ſo that of late I ſeldom have miſſed her meaning: but when ſhe firſt took me, I was an ignorant girl; and ſhe, who, as is very common, confounded want of knowledge with want of underſtanding, began once to deſpair of bringing me to any thing, becauſe, when I came into her chamber at the call of her bell, ſhe aſked me, *Whether we lived in Zembla*, and I did not

gueſs

gueſs the meaning of her enquiry; but modeſtly anſwered, that *I could not tell*. She had happened to ring once when I did not hear her, and meant to put me in mind of that country, where ſounds are ſaid to be congealed by the froſt.

Another time, as I was dreſſing her head, ſhe began to talk on a ſudden of *Meduſa*, and *ſnakes*, and *men turned into ſtone*, and *maids that, if they were not watched, would let their miſtreſſes be Gorgons*. I looked round me half frightened, and quite bewildered; till at laſt, finding that her literature was thrown away upon me, ſhe bid me, with great vehemence, reach the curling-irons.

It is not without ſome indignation, Mr. *Idler*, that I diſcover, in theſe artifices of vexation, ſomething worſe than foppery or caprice; a mean delight in ſuperiority, which knows itſelf in no danger of reproof or oppoſition; a cruel pleaſure in ſeeing the perplexity of a mind obliged to find what is ſtudiouſly concealed, and a mean indulgence of petty malevolence, in the ſharp cenſure of involuntary, and very often of inevitable, failings. When, beyond her expectation, I hit upon her meaning, I can perceive a ſudden cloud of diſappointment ſpread over her face, and have ſometimes been afraid leſt I ſhould loſe her favour by underſtanding her when ſhe means to puzzle me.

This day, however, ſhe has conquered my ſagacity. When ſhe went out of her dreſſing-room, ſhe ſaid nothing, but, *Molly, you know*, and haſtened to her chariot. What I am to know is yet a ſecret; but if I do not know, before ſhe comes back, what I yet have no means of diſcovering, ſhe will make

my

my dullneſs a pretence for a fortnight's ill humour, treat me as a creature devoid of the faculties neceſſary to the common duties of life, and perhaps give the next gown to the houſekeeper.

I am, SIR,

Your humble ſervant,

MOLLY QUICK.

NUMB. 47. SATURDAY, *March* 10, 1759.

To the IDLER.

Mr. IDLER,

I AM the unfortunate wife of a city wit, and cannot but think that my caſe may deſerve equal compaſſion with any of thoſe which have been repreſented in your paper.

I married my huſband within three months after the expiration of his apprenticeſhip; we put our money together, and furniſhed a large and ſplendid ſhop, in which he was for five years and a half diligent and civil. The notice which curioſity or kindneſs commonly beſtows on beginners, was continued by confidence and eſteem; one cuſtomer, pleaſed with his treatment and his bargain, recommended another, and we were buſy behind the counter from morning to night.

Thus every day encreaſed our wealth and our reputation. My huſband was often invited to dinner openly

openly on the *Exchange* by hundred thouſand pounds men; and whenever I went to any of the halls, the wives of the aldermen made me low courteſies. We always took up our notes before the day, and made all conſiderable payments by draughts upon our banker.

You will eaſily believe that I was well enough pleaſed with my condition; for what happineſs can be greater than that of growing every day richer and richer? I will not deny, that, imagining myſelf likely to be in a ſhort time the ſheriff's lady, I broke off my acquaintance with ſome of my neighbours, and adviſed my huſband to keep good company, and not to be ſeen with men that were worth nothing.

In time he found that ale diſagreed with his conſtitution, and went every night to drink his pint at a tavern, where he met with a ſet of criticks, who diſputed upon the merit of the different theatrical performers. By theſe idle fellows he was taken to the play, which at firſt he did not ſeem much to heed; for he owned, that he very ſeldom knew what they were doing, and that, while his companions would let him alone, he was commonly thinking on his laſt bargain.

Having once gone, however, he went again and again, though I often told him that three ſhillings were thrown away; at laſt he grew uneaſy if he miſſed a night, and importuned me to go with him. I went to a tragedy which they called *Macbeth*, and, when I came home, told him, that I could not bear to ſee men and women make themſelves ſuch fools, by pretending to be witches and ghoſts, generals and

kings,

kings, and to walk in their ſleep when they were as much awake as thoſe that looked at them. He told me that I muſt get higher notions, and that a play was the moſt rational of all entertainments, and moſt proper to relax the mind after the buſineſs of the day.

By degrees he gained knowledge of ſome of the players; and, when the play was over, very frequently treated them with ſuppers, for which he was admitted to ſtand behind the ſcenes.

He ſoon began to loſe ſome of his morning hours in the ſame folly, and was for one winter very diligent in his attendance on the rehearſals; but of this ſpecies of idleneſs he grew weary, and ſaid, that the play was nothing without the company.

His ardour for the diverſion of the evening increaſed; he bought a ſword, and paid five ſhillings a night to ſit in the boxes; he went ſometimes into a place which he calls the green-room, where all the wits of the age aſſemble; and when he had been there, could do nothing, for two or three days, but repeat their jeſts, or tell their diſputes.

He has now loſt his regard for every thing but the play-houſe; he invites, three times a week, one or other to drink claret, and talk of the drama. His firſt care in the morning is to read the play-bills; and if he remembers any lines of the tragedy which is to be repreſented, walks about the ſhop, repeating them ſo loud, and with ſuch ſtrange geſtures, that the paſſengers gather round the door.

His greateſt pleaſure when I married him, was to hear the ſituation of his ſhop commended, and to be told how many eſtates have been got in it by the ſame

trade;

trade; but of late he grows peeviſh at any mention of buſineſs, and delights in nothing ſo much as to be told that he ſpeaks like *Moſſop*.

Among his new aſſociates, he has learned another language, and ſpeaks in ſuch a ſtrain, that his neighbours cannot underſtand him. If a cuſtomer talks longer than he is willing to hear, he will complain that he has been excruciated with unmeaning verboſity; he laughs at the letters of his friends for their tameneſs of expreſſion, and often declares himſelf weary of attending to the minutiæ of a ſhop.

It is well for me that I know how to keep a book, for of late he is ſcarcely ever in the way. Since one of his friends told him that he had a genius for tragick poetry, he has locked himſelf in an upper room ſix or ſeven hours a day, and when I carry him any paper to be read or ſigned, I hear him talking vehemently to himſelf, ſometimes of love and beauty, ſometimes of friendſhip and virtue, but more frequently of liberty and his country.

I would gladly, Mr. *Idler*, be informed what to think of a ſhopkeeper, who is inceſſantly talking about liberty; a word, which, ſince his acquaintance with polite life, my huſband has always in his mouth; he is, on all occaſions, afraid of our liberty, and declares his reſolution to hazard all for liberty. What can the man mean? I am ſure he has liberty enough; it were better for him and me if his liberty was leſſened.

He has a friend whom he calls a critick, that comes twice a week to read what he is writing. This critick tells him that his piece is a little irregular, but that ſome detached ſcenes will ſhine prodigiouſly,

digiouſly, and that in the character of *Bombulus* he is wonderfully great. My ſcribbler then ſqueezes his hand, calls him the beſt of friends, thanks him for his ſincerity, and tells him that he hates to be flattered. I have reaſon to believe that he ſeldom parts with his dear friend without lending him two guineas, and am afraid that he gave bail for him three days ago.

By this courſe of life our credit as traders is leſſened, and I cannot forbear to ſuſpect, that my huſband's honour as a wit is not much advanced, for he ſeems to be always the loweſt of the company, and is afraid to tell his opinion till the reſt have ſpoken. When he was behind his counter, he uſed to be briſk, active, and jocular, like a man that knew what he was doing, and did not fear to look another in the face; but among wits and criticks he is timorous and awkward, and hangs down his head at his own table. Dear Mr. *Idler*, perſuade him, if you can, to return once more to his native element. Tell him, that wit will never make him rich, but that there are places where riches will always make a wit.

I am, SIR, &c.

DEBORAH GINGER.

UMB. 48. SATURDAY, *March* 17, 1759.

THERE is no kind of idleneſs, by which we are ſo eaſily ſeduced, as that which dignifies lf by the appearance of buſineſs, and by making loiterer imagine that he has ſomething to do ch muſt not be neglected, keeps him in perpetual :ation, and hurries him rapidly from place to :e.

He that ſits ſtill, or repoſes himſelf upon a couch, more deceives himſelf than he deceives others; cnows that he is doing nothing, and has no other .ce of his inſignificance than the reſolution, which lazy hourly make, of changing his mode of life.

To do nothing, every man is aſhamed; and to do :h, almoſt every man is unwilling or afraid. umerable expedients have therefore been in- ted to produce motion without labour, and em- yment without ſolicitude. The greater part of e whom the kindneſs of fortune has left to their i direction, and whom want does not keep ined to the counter or the plough, play through- life with the ſhadows of buſineſs, and know not aſt what they have been doing.

Theſe imitators of action are of all denominations. ne are ſeen at every auction without intention to chaſe; others appear punctually at the *Ex- ge*, though they are known there only by their s. Some are always making parties, to viſit ections for which they have no taſte, and ſome

neglect every pleaſure and every duty to near queſtions, in which they have no intereſt, debated in parliament.

Theſe men never appear more ridiculous, than in the diſtreſs which they imagine themſelves to feel, from ſome accidental interruption of thoſe empty purſuits. A tiger newly impriſoned is indeed more formidable, but not more angry, than *Jack Tulip* with-held from a floriſt's feaſt, or *Tom Diſtich* hindered from ſeeing the firſt repreſentation of a play.

As political affairs are the higheſt and moſt extenſive of temporal concerns; the mimick of a politician is more buſy and important than any other trifler. Monſieur *le Noir*, a man who, without property or importance in any corner of the earth, has, in the preſent confuſion of the world, declared himſelf a ſteady adherent to the *French*, is made miſerable by a wind that keeps back the packet-boat, and ſtill more miſerable by every account of a *Malouin* privateer caught in his cruize; he knows well that nothing can be done or ſaid by him which can produce any effect but that of laughter, that he can neither haſten nor retard good or evil, that his joys and ſorrows have ſcarcely any partakers; yet ſuch is his zeal, and ſuch his curioſity, that he would run barefooted to *Graveſend*, for the ſake of knowing firſt that the *Engliſh* had loſt a tender, and would ride out to meet every mail from the continent if he might be permitted to open it.

Learning is generally confeſſed to be deſirable, and there are ſome who fancy themſelves always buſy in acquiring it. Of theſe ambulatory ſtudents, one of the moſt buſy is my friend *Tom Reſtleſs*.

Tom

Tom has long had a mind to be a man of knowledge, but he does not care to ſpend much time among authors; for he is of opinion that few books deſerve the labour of peruſal, that they give the mind an unfaſhionable caſt, and deſtroy that freedom of thought and eaſineſs of manners indiſpenſably requiſite to acceptance in the world. *Tom* has therefore found another way to wiſdom. When he riſes he goes into a coffee-houſe, where he creeps ſo near to men whom he takes to be reaſoners as to hear their diſcourſe, and endeavours to remember ſomething which, when it has been ſtrained thro' *Tom*'s head, is ſo near to nothing, that what it once was cannot be diſcovered. This he carries round from friend to friend through a circle of viſits, till hearing what each ſays upon the queſtion, he becomes able at dinner to ſay a little himſelf; and as every great genius relaxes himſelf among his inferiors, meets with ſome who wonder how ſo young a man can talk ſo wiſely.

At night he has a new feaſt prepared for his intellects; he always runs to a diſputing ſociety, or a ſpeaking club, where he half hears what, if he had heard the whole, he would but half underſtand; goes home pleaſed with the conſciouſneſs of a day well ſpent, lies down full of ideas, and riſes in the morning empty as before.

NUMB. 49. SATURDAY, *March* 24, 17

I SUPPED three nights ago with my friend *Marvel*. His affairs obliged him lately to a journey into *Devonſhire*, from which he has ju turned. He knows me to be a very patient h and was glad of my company, as it gave him a portunity of diſburthening himſelf by a minu lation of the caſualties of his expedition.

Will is not one of thoſe who go out and i with nothing to tell. He has a ſtory of his tr which will ſtrike a home-bred citizen with h and has in ten days ſuffered ſo often the extren terror and joy, that he is in doubt whether he ever again expoſe either his body or mind to danger and fatigue.

When he left *London* the morning was brigh a fair day was promiſed. But *Will* is born to ſtr with difficulties. That happened to him, whi ſometimes, perhaps, happened to others. Beſi had gone more than ten miles, it began to What courſe was to be taken? His ſoul diſd to turn back. He did what the King of might have done; he flapped his hat, button his cape, and went forwards, fortifying his mi the ſtoical conſolation, that whatever is violen be ſhort.

His conſtancy was not long tried; at the di of about half a mile he ſaw an inn, which he e wet and weary, and found civil treatment and r

re

refreſhment. After a reſpite of about two hours, he looked abroad, and ſeeing the ſky clear, called for his horſe, and paſſed the firſt ſtage without any other memorable accident.

Will conſidered, that labour muſt be relieved by pleaſure, and that the ſtrength which great undertakings require muſt be maintained by copious nutriment; he therefore ordered himſelf an elegant ſupper, drank two bottles of claret, and paſſed the beginning of the night in ſound ſleep; but waking before light, was forewarned of the troubles of the next day, by a ſhower beating againſt his windows with ſuch violence as to threaten the diſſolution of nature. When he aroſe, he found what he expected, that the country was under water. He joined himſelf, however, to a company that was travelling the ſame way, and came ſafely to the place of dinner, though every ſtep of his horſe daſhed the mud into the air.

In the afternoon, having parted from his company, he ſet forward alone, and paſſed many collections of water, of which it was impoſſible to gueſs the depth, and which he now cannot review without ſome cenſure of his own raſhneſs; but what a man undertakes he muſt perform, and *Marvel* hates a coward at his heart.

Few that lie warm in their beds, think what others undergo, who have perhaps been as tenderly educated, and have as acute ſenſations as themſelves. My friend was now to lodge the ſecond night almoſt fifty miles from home, in a houſe which he never had ſeen before, among people to whom he was totally a ſtranger, not knowing whether the next man

he ſhould meet would prove good or bad; but ſeeing an inn of a good appearance, he rode reſolutely into the yard; and knowing that reſpect is often paid in proportion as it is claimed, delivered his injunction to the hoſtler with ſpirit, and entering the houſe, called vigorouſly about him.

On the third day up roſe the ſun and Mr. *Marvel*. His troubles and his dangers were now ſuch, as he wiſhes no other man ever to encounter. The ways were leſs frequented, and the country more thinly inhabited. He rode many a lonely hour through mire and water, and met not a ſingle ſoul for two miles together with whom he could exchange a word. He cannot deny that, looking round upon the dreary region, and ſeeing nothing but bleak fields and naked trees, hills obſcured by fogs, and flats covered with inundations, he did for ſome time ſuffer melancholy to prevail upon him, and wiſhed himſelf again ſafe at home. One comfort he had, which was to conſider, that none of his friends were in the ſame diſtreſs, for whom, if they had been with him, he ſhould have ſuffered more than for himſelf; he could not forbear ſometimes to conſider how happily the *Idler* is ſettled in an eaſier condition, who, ſurrounded like him with terrors, could have done nothing but lie down and die.

Amidſt theſe reflections he came to a town and found a dinner, which diſpoſed him to more cheerful ſentiments: but the joys of life are ſhort, and its miſeries are long; he mounted and travelled fifteen miles more through dirt and deſolation.

At laſt the ſun ſet, and all the horrors of darkneſs came upon him. He then repented the weak indulgence

dulgence in which he had gratified himſelf at noon with too long an interval of reſt: yet he went forward along a path which he could no longer ſee, ſometimes ruſhing ſuddenly into water, and ſometimes incumbered with ſtiff clay, ignorant whither he was going, and uncertain whether his next ſtep might not be the laſt.

In this diſmal gloom of nocturnal peregrination his horſe unexpectedly ſtood ſtill. *Marvel* had heard many relations of the inſtinct of horſes, and was in doubt what danger might be at hand. Sometimes he fancied that he was on the bank of a river ſtill and deep, and ſometimes that a dead body lay acroſs the track. He ſat ſtill awhile to recollect his thoughts; and as he was about to alight and explore the darkneſs, out ſtepped a man with a lantern, and opened the turnpike. He hired a guide to the town, arrived in ſafety, and ſlept in quiet.

The reſt of his journey was nothing but danger. He climbed and deſcended precipices on which vulgar mortals tremble to look; he paſſed marſhes like the *Serbonian bog, where armies whole have ſunk*; he forded rivers where the current roared like the *Egre* of the *Severn*; or ventured himſelf on bridges that trembled under him, from which he looked down on foaming whirlpools, or dreadful abyſſes; he wandered over houſeleſs heaths, amidſt all the rage of the elements, with the ſnow driving in his face, and the tempeſt howling in his ears.

Such are the colours in which *Marvel* paints his adventures. He has accuſtomed himſelf to ſounding words and hyperbolical images, till he has loſt the power of true deſcription. In a road through

which the heavieſt carriages paſs without difficulty, and the poſt-boy every day and night goes and returns, he meets with hardſhips like thoſe which are endured in *Siberian* deſerts, and miſſes nothing of romantick danger but a giant and a dragon. When his dreadful ſtory is told in proper terms, it is only that the way was dirty in winter, and that he experienced the common viciſſitudes of rain and ſunſhine.

NUMB. 50. SATURDAY, *March* 31, 1759.

THE character of Mr. *Marvel* has raiſed the merriment of ſome and the contempt of others, who do not ſufficiently conſider how often they hear and practiſe the ſame arts of exaggerated narration.

There is not, perhaps, among the multitudes of all conditions that ſwarm upon the earth, a ſingle man who does not believe that he has ſomething extraordinary to relate of himſelf; and who does not, at one time or other, ſummon the attention of his friends to the caſualties of his adventures and the viciſſitudes of his fortune; caſualties and viciſſitudes that happen alike in lives uniform and diverſified; to the commander of armies, and the writer at a deſk; to the ſailor who reſigns himſelf to the wind and water, and the farmer whoſe longeſt journey is to the market.

In the preſent ſtate of the world man may paſs through *Shakeſpeare*'s ſeven ſtages of life, and meet nothing

nothing ſingular or wonderful. But ſuch is every man's attention to himſelf, that what is common and unheeded when it is only ſeen, becomes remarkable and peculiar when we happen to feel it.

It is well enough known to be according to the uſual proceſs of nature, that men ſhould ſicken and recover, that ſome deſigns ſhould ſucceed and others miſcarry, that friends ſhould be ſeparated and meet again, that ſome ſhould be made angry by endeavours to pleaſe them, and ſome be pleaſed when no care has been uſed to gain their approbation; that men and women ſhould at firſt come together by chance, like each other ſo well as to commence acquaintance, improve acquaintance into fondneſs, increaſe or extinguiſh fondneſs by marriage, and have children of different degrees of intellects and virtue, ſome of whom die before their parents, and others ſurvive them.

Yet let any man tell his own ſtory, and nothing of all this has ever befallen him according to the common order of things; ſomething has always diſcriminated his caſe; ſome unuſual concurrence of events has appeared which made him more happy or more miſerable than other mortals; for in pleaſures or calamities, however common, every one has comforts and afflictions of his own.

It is certain that without ſome artificial augmentations, many of the pleaſures of life, and almoſt all its embelliſhments, would fall to the ground. If no man was to expreſs more delight than he felt, thoſe who felt moſt would raiſe little envy. If travellers were to deſcribe the moſt laboured performances of

art with the ſame coldneſs as they ſurvey them, all expectations of happineſs from change of place would ceaſe. The pictures of *Raphael* would hang without ſpectators, and the gardens of *Verſailles* might be inhabited by hermits. All the pleaſure that is received ends in an opportunity of ſplendid falſehood, in the power of gaining notice by the diſplay of beauties which the eye was weary of beholding, and a hiſtory of happy moments, of which, in reality, the moſt happy was the laſt.

The ambition of ſuperior ſenſibility and ſuperior eloquence diſpoſes the lovers of arts to receive rapture at one time, and communicate it at another; and each labours firſt to impoſe upon himſelf, and then to propagate the impoſture.

Pain is leſs ſubject than pleaſure to caprices of expreſſion. The torments of diſeaſe, and the grief for irremediable misfortunes, ſometimes are ſuch as no words can declare, and can only be ſignified by groans, or ſobs, or inarticulate ejaculations. Man has from nature a mode of utterance peculiar to pain, but he has none peculiar to pleaſure, becauſe he never has pleaſure but in ſuch degrees as the ordinary uſe of language may equal or ſurpaſs.

It is nevertheleſs certain, that many pains as well as pleaſures are heightened by rhetorical affectation, and that the picture is, for the moſt part, bigger than the life.

When we deſcribe our ſenſations of another's ſorrows, either in friendly or ceremonious condolence, the cuſtoms of the world ſcarcely admit of rigid veracity. Perhaps the fondeſt friendſhip would enrage oftener

:ner than comfort, were the tongue on ſuch occa-
ıs faithfully to repreſent the ſentiments of the
ırt; and I think the ſtricteſt moraliſts allow forms
addreſs to be uſed without much regard to their
ral acceptation, when either reſpect or tender-
s requires them, becauſe they are univerſally
)wn to denote not the degree but the ſpecies of
ſentiments.

But the ſame indulgence cannot be allowed to him
o aggravates dangers incurred or ſorrow endured
himſelf, becauſe he darkens the proſpect of futu-
, and multiplies the pains of our condition by
leſs terror. Thoſe who magnify their delights
leſs criminal deceivers, yet they raiſe hopes which
ſure to be diſappointed. It would be undoubt-
y beſt, if we could ſee and hear every thing as it
that nothing might be too anxiouſly dreaded, or
ardently purſued.

NUMB. 51. SATURDAY, *April* 7, 1759.

IT has been commonly remarked, that eminent men are leaſt eminent at home, that bright characters loſe much of their ſplendor at a nearer view, and many who fill the world with their fame, excite very little reverence among thoſe that ſurround them in their domeſtick privacies.

To blame or to ſuſpect is eaſy and natural. When the fact is evident, and the cauſe doubtful, ſome accuſation is always engendered between idleneſs and malignity. This diſparity of general and familiar eſteem is therefore imputed to hidden vices, and to practices indulged in ſecret, but carefully covered from the publick eye.

Vice will indeed always produce contempt. The dignity of *Alexander*, though nations fell proſtrate before him, was certainly held in little veneration by the partakers of his midnight revels, who had ſeen him, in the madneſs of wine, murder his friend, or ſet fire to the *Perſian* palace at the inſtigation of a harlot; and it is well remembered among us, that the avarice of *Marlborough* kept him in ſubjection to his wife, while he was dreaded by *France* as her conqueror, and honoured by the emperor as his deliverer.

But though, where there is vice there muſt be want of reverence, it is not reciprocally true, that when there is want of reverence there is always vice.

vice. That awe which great actions or abilities impreſs will be inevitably diminiſhed by acquaintance, though nothing either mean or criminal ſhould be found.

Of men, as of every thing elſe, we muſt judge according to our knowledge. When we ſee of a hero only his battles, or of a writer only his books, we have nothing to allay our ideas of their greatneſs. We conſider the one only as the guardian of his country, and the other only as the inſtructor of mankind. We have neither opportunity nor motive to examine the minuter parts of their lives, or the leſs apparent peculiarities of their characters; we name them with habitual reſpect, and forget, what we ſtill continue to know, that they are men like other mortals.

But ſuch is the conſtitution of the world, that much of life muſt be ſpent in the ſame manner by the wiſe and the ignorant, the exalted and the low. Men, however diſtinguiſhed by external accidents or intrinſick qualities, have all the ſame wants, the ſame pains, and, as far as the ſenſes are conſulted, the ſame pleaſures. The petty cares and petty duties are the ſame in every ſtation to every underſtanding, and every hour brings ſome occaſion on which we all ſink to the common level. We are all naked till we are dreſſed, and hungry till we are fed; and the general's triumph, and ſage's diſputation, end, like the humble labours of the ſmith or plowman, in a dinner or in ſleep.

Thoſe notions which are to be collected by reaſon, in oppoſition to the ſenſes, will ſeldom ſtand

forward

forward in the mind, but lie treaſured in the remoter repoſitories of memory, to be found only when they are ſought. Whatever any man may have written or done, his precepts or his valour will ſcarcely overbalance the unimportant uniformity which runs through his time. We do not eaſily conſider him as great, whom our own eyes ſhew us to be little; nor labour to keep preſent to our thoughts the latent excellences of him who ſhares with us all our weakneſſes and many of our follies; who like us is delighted with ſlight amuſements, buſied with trifling employments, and diſturbed by little vexations.

Great powers cannot be exerted, but when great exigences make them neceſſary. Great exigences can happen but ſeldom, and therefore thoſe qualities which have a claim to the veneration of mankind, lie hid, for the moſt part, like ſubterranean treaſures, over which the foot paſſes as on common ground, till neceſſity breaks open the golden cavern.

In the ancient celebrations of victory, a ſlave was placed on the triumphal car, by the ſide of the general, who reminded him by a ſhort ſentence, that he was a man. Whatever danger there might be leſt a leader, in his paſſage to the capitol, ſhould forget the frailties of his nature, there was ſurely no need of ſuch an admonition; the intoxication could not have continued long; he would have been at home but a few hours before ſome of his dependants would have forgot his greatneſs, and ſhewn him, that notwithſtanding his laurels he was yet a man.

There

re are ſome who try to eſcape this domeſtick
ation, by labouring to appear always wiſe or
great; but he that ſtrives againſt nature, will
r ſtrive in vain. To be grave of mien and
utterance; to look with ſolicitude and ſpeak
ſitation, is attainable at will; but the ſhew of
is ridiculous when there is nothing to cauſe
as that of valour where there is nothing to
ed.

an who has duly conſidered the condition
being, will contentedly yield to the courſe of
he will not pant for diſtinction where diſ-
would imply no merit; but though on
occaſions he may wiſh to be greater than
he will be ſatisfied in common occurrences
be leſs.

NUMB. 52. SATURDAY, *April* 14, 1759.

Reſponſare cupidinibus. HOR.

THE practice of ſelf-denial, or the forbearance of lawful pleaſure, has been conſidered by almoſt every nation, from the remoteſt ages, as the higheſt exaltation of human virtue; and all have agreed to pay reſpect and veneration to thoſe who abſtained from the delights of life, even when they did not cenſure thoſe who enjoy them.

The general voice of mankind, civil and barbarous, confeſſes that the mind and body are at variance, and that neither can be made happy by its proper gratifications, but at the expence of the other; that a pampered body will darken the mind, and an enlightened mind will macerate the body. And none have failed to confer their eſteem on thoſe who prefer intellect to ſenſe, who controul their lower by their higher faculties, and forget the wants and deſires of animal life for rational diſquiſitions or pious contemplations.

The earth has ſcarce a country ſo far advanced towards political regularity as to divide the inhabitants into claſſes, where ſome orders of men or women are not diſtinguiſhed by voluntary ſeverities, and where the reputation of their ſanctity is not increaſed in proportion to the rigour of their rules, and the exactneſs of their performance.

When an opinion to which there is no temptation of intereſt ſpreads wide and continues long, it may be reaſonably preſumed to have been infuſed by nature or dictated by reaſon. It has been often obſerved that the fictions of impoſture, and illuſions of fancy, ſoon give way to time and experience; and that nothing keeps its ground but truth, which gains every day new influence by new confirmation.

But truth, when it is reduced to practice, eaſily becomes ſubject to caprice and imagination, and many particular acts will be wrong, though their general principle be right. It cannot be denied that a juſt conviction of the reſtraint neceſſary to be laid upon the appetites has produced extravagant and unnatural modes of mortification, and inſtitutions which, however favourably conſidered, will be found to violate nature without promoting piety.

But the doctrine of ſelf-denial is not weakened in itſelf by the errors of thoſe who miſinterpret or miſapply it; the encroachment of the appetites upon the underſtanding is hourly perceived, and the ſtate of thoſe whom ſenſuality has enſlaved, is known to be in the higheſt degree deſpicable and wretched.

The dread of ſuch ſhameful captivity may juſtly raiſe alarms, and wiſdom will endeavour to keep danger at a diſtance. By timely caution and ſuſpicious vigilance thoſe deſires may be repreſſed, to which indulgence would ſoon give abſolute dominion; thoſe enemies may be overcome, which, when

when they have been a while accuſtomed to victory, can no longer be reſiſted.

Nothing is more fatal to happineſs or virtue, than that confidence which flatters us with an opinion of our own ſtrength, and by aſſuring us of the power of retreat precipitates us into hazard. Some may ſafely venture further than others into the regions of delight, lay themſelves more open to the golden ſhafts of pleaſure, and advance nearer to the reſidence of the Syrens; but he that is beſt armed with conſtancy and reaſon is yet vulnerable in one part or other, and to every man there is a point fixed, beyond which, if he paſſes, he will not eaſily return. It is certainly moſt wiſe, as it is moſt ſafe, to ſtop before he touches the utmoſt limit, ſince every ſtep of advance will more and more entice him to go forward, till he ſhall at laſt enter the receſſes of voluptuouſneſs, and ſloth and deſpondency cloſe the paſſage behind him.

To deny early and inflexibly, is the only art of checking the importunity of deſire, and of preſerving quiet and innocence. Innocent gratifications muſt be ſometimes withheld; he that complies with all lawful deſires will certainly loſe his empire over himſelf, and in time either ſubmit his reaſon to his wiſhes, and think all his deſires lawful, or diſmiſs his reaſon as troubleſome and intruſive, and reſolve to ſnatch what he may happen to wiſh, without enquiry about right and wrong.

No man, whoſe appetites are his maſters, can perform the duties of his nature with ſtrictneſs and

gularity; he that would be ſuperior to external fluences muſt firſt become ſuperior to his own ſſions.

When the *Roman* general, ſitting at ſupper with plate of turnips before him, was ſolicited by ge preſents to betray his truſt, he aſked the eſſengers whether he that could ſup on turnips is a man likely to ſell his country. Upon him o has reduced his ſenſes to obedience temptation s loſt its power, he is able to attend impartially virtue, and execute her commands without he- ation.

To ſet the mind above the appetites is the end abſtinence, which one of the Fathers obſerves be not a virtue, but the ground-work of virtue. forbearing to do what may innocently be done, may add hourly new vigour or reſolution, and ure the power of reſiſtance when pleaſure or in- reſt ſhall lend their charms to guilt.

NUMB. 53. SATURDAY, *April* 21, 1759.

To the IDLER.

SIR,

I Have a wife that keeps good company. You know that the word *good* varies its meaning according to the value ſet upon different qualities in different places. To be a good man in a college, is to be learned; in a camp, to be brave; and in the city, to be rich. By good company in the place which I have the misfortune to inhabit, we underſtand not only thoſe from whom any good can be learned, whether wiſdom or virtue; or by whom any good can be conferred, whether profit or reputation. Good company is the company of thoſe whoſe birth is high, and whoſe riches are great, or of thoſe whom the rich and noble admit to familiarity.

I am a gentleman of a fortune by no means exuberant, but more than equal to the wants of my family, and for ſome years equal to our deſires. My wife, who had never been accuſtomed to ſplendour, joined her endeavours to mine in the ſuperintendence of our œconomy; we lived in decent plenty, and were not excluded from moderate pleaſures.

But

But ſlight cauſes produce great effects. All my appineſs has been deſtroyed by change of place; irtue is too often merely local; in ſome ſituations he air diſeaſes the body, and in others poiſons the ind. Being obliged to remove my habitation, I as led by my evil genius to a convenient houſe n a ſtreet where many of the nobility reſide. We ad ſcarcely ranged our furniture, and aired our ooms, when my wife began to grow diſcontented, nd to wonder what the neighbours would think hen they ſaw ſo few chairs and chariots at her oor.

Her acquaintance who came to ſee her from the uarter that we had left, mortified her without eſign, by continual enquiries about the ladies, hoſe houſes they viewed from our windows. She as aſhamed to confeſs that ſhe had no intercourſe ith them, and ſheltered her diſtreſs under general nſwers, which always tended to raiſe ſuſpicion that he knew more than ſhe would tell; but ſhe was ften reduced to difficulties, when the courſe of alk introduced queſtions about the furniture or rnaments of their houſes, which, when ſhe could et no intelligence, ſhe was forced to paſs ſlightly ver, as things which ſhe ſaw ſo often, that ſhe ever minded them.

To all theſe vexations ſhe was reſolved to put n end, and redoubled her viſits to thoſe few of er friends, who viſited thoſe who kept good com-any; and, if ever ſhe met a lady of quality, forced erſelf into notice by reſpect and aſſiduity. Her dvances were generally rejected; and ſhe heard

them, as they went down ſtairs, talk how ſome creatures put themſelves forward.

She was not diſcouraged, but crept forward from one to another; and, as perſeverance will do great things, ſapped her way unperceived, till, unexpectedly, ſhe appeared at the card-table of lady *Biddy Porpoiſe*, a lethargick virgin of ſeventy-ſix, whom all the families in the next ſquare viſited very punctually when ſhe was not at home.

This was the firſt ſtep of that elevation to which my wife has ſince aſcended. For five months ſhe had no name in her mouth but that of lady *Biddy*, who, let the world ſay what it would, had a fine underſtanding, and ſuch a command of her temper, that, whether ſhe won or loſt, ſhe ſlept over her cards.

At lady *Biddy*'s ſhe met with lady *Towzry*, whoſe favour ſhe gained by eſtimating her ear-rings, which were counterfeit, at twice the value of real diamonds. When ſhe had once entered two houſes of diſtinction, ſhe was eaſily admitted into more, and in ten weeks had all her time anticipated by parties and engagements. Every morning ſhe is beſpoke, in the ſummer, for the gardens; in the winter, for a ſale; every afternoon ſhe has viſits to pay, and every night brings an inviolable appointment, or an aſſembly in which the beſt company in the town were to appear.

You will eaſily imagine that much of my domeſtick comfort is withdrawn. I never ſee my wife but in the hurry of preparation, or the languor of wearineſs. To dreſs and to undreſs is almoſt her whole buſineſs in private, and the ſervants take

advantage

advantage of her negligence to increaſe expence. But I can ſupply her omiſſions by my own diligence, and ſhould not much regret this new courſe of life, if it did nothing more than transfer to me the care of our accounts. The changes which it has made are more vexatious. My wife has no longer the uſe of her underſtanding. She has no rule of action but the faſhion. She has no opinion but that of the people of quality. She has no language but the dialect of her own ſet of company. She hates and admires in humble imitation; and echoes the words *charming* and *deteſtable* without conſulting her own perceptions.

If for a few minutes we ſit down together, ſhe entertains me with the repartees of lady *Cackle*, or the converſation of lord *Whiffler* and miſs *Quick*, and wonders to find me receiving with indifference ſayings which put all the company into laughter.

By her old friends ſhe is no longer very willing to be ſeen, but ſhe muſt not rid herſelf of them all at once; and is ſometimes ſurpriſed by her beſt viſitants in company which ſhe would not ſhew, and cannot hide; but from the moment that a counteſs enters, ſhe takes care neither to hear nor ſee them: they ſoon find themſelves neglected and retire, and ſhe tells her ladyſhip that they are ſomehow related at a great diſtance, and that as they are good ſort of people ſhe cannot be rude to them.

As by this ambitious union with thoſe that are above her, ſhe is always forced upon diſadvanta-

geous compariſons of her condition w
ſhe has a conſtant ſource of miſery wi
never returns from glittering aſſemblies
nificent apartments but ſhe growls out h
tent, and wonders why ſhe was doomed
digent a ſtate. When ſhe attends the duc
ſale, ſhe always ſees ſomething that ſhe can
and, that ſhe may not ſeem wholly inſignific
will ſometimes venture to bid, and often n
quiſitions which ſhe did not want at price
ſhe cannot afford.

What adds to all this uneaſineſs is, th
expence is without uſe, and this vanity w
honour; ſhe forſakes houſes where ſhe mig
courted, for thoſe where ſhe is only ſuffered
equals are daily made her enemies, and he
periors will never be her friends.

I am, SIR, yours, &c

. 54. SATURDAY, *April* 28, 1759.

To the IDLER.

R,

I have lately entertained your admirers
h the caſe of an unfortunate huſband, and
given a demonſtrative proof you are not
en to hear appeals and terminate differences
man and wife; I therefore take the li-
preſent you with the caſe of an injured lady,
s it chiefly relates to what I think the
all a point of law, I ſhall do in as juridical
r as I am capable, and ſubmit it to the
ition of the learned gentlemen of that pro-

is. In the ſtyle of my marriage articles, a
was *had and ſolemnized* about ſix months
ween me and Mr. *Savecharges*, a gentleman
of a plentiful fortune of his own, and one
was perſuaded, would improve, and not
ne.

our marriage Mr. *Savecharges* had all along
the ſalutary exerciſe of walking on foot, to
mpered eaſe, as he terms it, of lolling in a
but notwithſtanding his fine panegyricks
ng, the great advantages the infantry were
ole poſſeſſion of, and the many dreadful
they eſcaped, he found I had very different

notions of an equipage, and was not eaſily to be converted, or gained over to his party.

An equipage I was determined to have, whenever I married. I too well knew the diſpoſition of my intended conſort to leave the providing one intirely to his honour, and flatter myſelf Mr. *Savecharges* has, in the articles made previous to our marriage, *agreed to keep me a coach*; but leſt I ſhould be miſtaken, or the attornies ſhould not have done me juſtice in methodizing or legalizing theſe half dozen words, I will ſet about and tranſcribe that part of the agreement, which will explain the matter to you much better than can be done by one who is ſo deeply intereſted in the event; and ſhew on what foundation I build my hopes of being ſoon under the tranſporting, delightful denomination of a faſhionable lady, who enjoys the exalted and much-envied felicity of bowling about in her own coach.

"And further the ſaid *Solomon Savecharges*, for "divers good cauſes and conſiderations him here-"unto moving, hath agreed, and doth hereby "agree, that the ſaid *Solomon Savecharges* ſhall and "will, ſo ſoon as conveniently may be after the ſo-"lemnization of the ſaid intended marriage, at his "own proper coſt and charges, find and provide *a* "*certain vehicle or four-wheel carriage, commonly* "*called or known by the name of a coach*; which ſaid "vehicle or wheel-carriage, ſo called or known by "the name of a coach, ſhall be *uſed and enjoyed* by "the ſaid *Sukey Modiſh*, his intended wife," [pray mind that, Mr. *Idler*] "at ſuch times and in ſuch "manner as ſhe the ſaid *Sukey Modiſh* ſhall think fit "and convenient."

Such,

ſuch, Mr. *Idler*, is the agreement my *paſſionate uirer* entered into; and what the *dear frugal band* calls a performance of it remains to be de-bed. Soon after the ceremony of ſigning and ling was over, our wedding-clothes being ſent ne, and, in ſhort, every thing in readineſs except coach, my own ſhadow was ſcarce more conſtant n my paſſionate lover in his attendance on me; aried by his perpetual importunities for what he led a completion of his bliſs, I conſented to make n happy; in a few days I gave him my hand, l, attended by *Hymen* in his ſaffron-robes, retired a country-ſeat of my huſband's, where the honey-on flew over our heads ere we had time to re-lect ourſelves, or think of our engagements in vn. Well, to town we came, and you may be e, Sir, I expected to ſtep into my coach on my ival here; but, what was my ſurprize and diſap-intment, when, inſtead of this, he began to ſound my ears, "That the intereſt of money was low, y low; and what a terrible thing it was to be umbered with a little regiment of ſervants in eſe hard times." I could eaſily perceive what all is tended to, but would not ſeem to underſtand m; which made it highly neceſſary for Mr. *Save-arge* to explain himſelf more intelligibly; to harp on and proteſt he dreaded the expence of keeping coach. And truly, for his part, he could not nceive how the pleaſure reſulting from ſuch a nvenience could be any way adequate to the avy expence attending it. I now thought it high me to ſpeak with equal plainneſs, and told him, as ie fortune I brought fairly entitled me to ride in

my

my own coach, and as I was ſenſible his circumſtances would very well afford it, he muſt pardon me if I inſiſted on a performance of his agreement.'

I appeal to you, Mr. *Idler*, whether any thing could be more civil, more complaiſant, than this? And would you believe it, the creature in return, a few days after, accoſted me in an offended tone, with, "Madam, I can now tell you your coach is "ready; and ſince you are ſo paſſionately fond of "one, I intend you the honour of keeping a pair of "horſes.—You inſiſted upon having an article of "pin-money, and horſes are no part of my agree-"ment." Baſe, deſigning wretch!—I beg your pardon, Mr. *Idler*, the very recital of ſuch mean, ungentleman-like behaviour fires my blood, and lights up a flame within me. But hence, thou worſt of monſters, ill-timed rage, and let me not ſpoil my cauſe for want of temper.

Now though I am convinced I might make a worſe uſe of part of the pin-money, than by extending my bounty towards the ſupport of ſo uſeful a part of the brute creation; yet, like a true-born Engliſhwoman, I am ſo tenacious of my rights and privileges, and moreover ſo good a friend to the gentlemen of the law, that I proteſt, Mr. *Idler*, ſooner than tamely give up the point, and be quibbled out of my right, I will receive my pin-money, as it were, with one hand, and pay it to them with the other; provided they will give me, or, which is the ſame thing, my truſtees, encouragement to commence a ſuit againſt this dear frugal huſband of mine.

And of this I can't have the leaſt ſhadow of doubt, inaſmuch as I have been told by very good authority, it is ſome way or other laid down as a rule, "* *That whenever* the law doth give any "thing to one, it giveth impliedly whatever is ne- "ceſſary for the taking and enjoying the ſame." Now I would gladly know what enjoyment I, or any lady in the kingdom, can have of a coach without horſes? The anſwer is obvious—None at all! For as Serj. *Catlyne* very wiſely obſerves, "Though a coach has wheels, to the end it may "thereby and by virtue thereof be enabled to "move; yet in point of utility it may as well have "none, if they are not put in motion by means of "its vital parts, that is, the horſes."

And therefore, Sir, I humbly hope you and the learned in the law will be of opinion, that two certain animals, or quadruped creatures, commonly called or known by the name of horſes, ought to be annexed to, and go along with the coach.

SUKEY SAVECHARGES.

* Coke on Littleton.

NUMB. 55. SATURDAY, *May* 5, 1759.

To the IDLER.

Mr. IDLER,

I HAVE taken the liberty of laying before you my complaint, and of deſiring advice or conſolation with the greater confidence, becauſe I believe many other writers have ſuffered the ſame indignities with myſelf, and hope my quarrel will be regarded by you and your readers as the common cauſe of literature.

Having been long a ſtudent, I thought myſelf qualified in time to become an author. My enquiries have been much diverſified and far extended, and not finding my genius directing me by irreſiſtible impulſe to any particular ſubject, I deliberated three years which part of knowledge to illuſtrate by my labours. Choice is more often determined by accident than by reaſon: I walked abroad one morning with a curious lady, and by her enquiries and obſervations was incited to write the natural hiſtory of the county in which I reſide.

Natural hiſtory is no work for one that loves his chair or his bed. Speculation may be purſued on a ſoft couch, but nature muſt be obſerved in the open air. I have collected materials with indefatigable pertinacity. I have gathered glow-worms in the evening, and ſnails in the morning; I have ſeen the daiſy cloſe and open, I have heard the owl

ſhriek

rick at midnight, and hunted inſects in the heat of ɔn.

Seven years I was employed in collecting animals d vegetables, and then found that my deſign was t imperfect. The ſubterranean treaſures of the ace had been paſſed unobſerved, and another year ıs to be ſpent in mines and coal-pits. What I ıd already done ſupplied a ſufficient motive to do ore. I acquainted myſelf with the black inhabi- nts of metallic caverns, and, in defiance of damps ıd floods, wandered through the gloomy laby- ıths, and gathered foſſils from every fiſſure.

At laſt I began to write, and as I finiſhed any ction of my book, read it to ſuch of my friends as ere moſt ſkilful in the matter which it treated. one of them were ſatisfied; one diſliked the diſ- ɔſition of the parts, another the colours of the ſtyle; ıe adviſed me to enlarge, another to abridge. I ſolved to read no more, but to take my own way ıd write on, for by conſultation I only perplexed ıy thoughts and retarded my work.

The book was at laſt finiſhed, and I did not ɔubt but my labour would be repaid by profit, and ıy ambition ſatisfied with honours. I conſidered ıat natural hiſtory is neither temporary nor local, ıd that though I limited my enquiries to my own ɔunty, yet every part of the earth has productions ɔmmon to all the reſt. Civil hiſtory may be par- ally ſtudied, the revolutions of one nation may be eglected by another, but after that in which all ave an intereſt, all muſt be inquiſitive. No man ın have ſunk ſo far into ſtupidity as not to con- der the properties of the ground on which he walks,

walks, of the plants on which he feeds, or the animals that delight his ear or amuſe his eye, and therefore I computed that univerſal curioſity would call for many editions of my book, and that in five years I ſhould gain fifteen thouſand pounds by the ſale of thirty thouſand copies.

When I began to write I inſured the houſe, and ſuffered the utmoſt ſolicitude when I entruſted my book to the carrier, though I had ſecured it againſt miſchances by lodging two tranſcripts in different places. At my arrival, I expected that the patrons of learning would contend for the honour of a dedication, and reſolved to maintain the dignity of letters, by a haughty contempt of pecuniary ſolicitations.

I took lodgings near the houſe of the royal ſociety, and expected every morning a viſit from the preſident. I walked in the Park, and wondered that I overheard no mention of the great naturaliſt. At laſt I viſited a noble earl, and told him of my work; he anſwered, that he was under an engagement never to ſubſcribe. I was angry to have that refuſed which I did not mean to aſk, and concealed my deſign of making him immortal. I went next day to another, and, in reſentment of my late affront, offered to prefix his name to my new book. He ſaid, coldly, that *he did not underſtand thoſe things*; another thought *there were too many books*; and another would *talk with me when the races were over*.

Being amazed to find a man of learning ſo indecently ſlighted, I reſolved to indulge the philoſophical pride of retirement and independence. I *then ſent* to ſome of the principal bookſellers the

plan

plan of my book, and beſpoke a large room in the next tavern, that I might more commodiouſly ſee them together, and enjoy the conteſt, while they were outbidding one another. I drank my coffee, and yet nobody was come; at laſt I received a note from one, to tell me, that he was going out of town; and from another, that natural hiſtory was out of his way; at laſt there came a grave man, who deſired to ſee the work, and, without opening it, told me, that a book of that ſize *would never do.*

I then condeſcended to ſtep into ſhops, and mention my work to the maſters. Some never dealt with authors; others had their hands full; ſome never had known ſuch a dead time; others had loſt by all that they had publiſhed for the laſt twelvemonth. One offered to print my work, if I could procure ſubſcriptions for five hundred, and would allow me two hundred copies for my property. I loſt my patience, and gave him a kick, for which he has indicted me.

I can eaſily perceive, that there is a combination among them to defeat my expectations; and I find it ſo general, that I am ſure it muſt have been long concerted. I ſuppoſe ſome of my friends, to whom I read the firſt part, gave notice of my deſign, and, perhaps, ſold the treacherous intelligence at a higher price than the fraudulence of trade will now allow me for my book.

Inform me, Mr. *Idler*, what I muſt do; where muſt knowledge and induſtry find their recompence, thus neglected by the high, and cheated by the low? I ſometimes reſolve to print my book at my

own

own expence, and, like the Sibyl, double the price; and ſometimes am tempted, in emulation of *Raleigh*, to throw it into the fire, and leave this ſordid generation to the curſes of poſterity. Tell me, dear *Idler*, what I ſhall do.

I am, SIR, &c.

NUMB. 56. SATURDAY, *May* 21, 1759.

THERE is ſuch difference between the purſuits of men, that one part of the inhabitants of a great city lives to little other purpoſe than to wonder at the reſt. Some have hopes and fears, wiſhes and averſions, which never enter into the thoughts of others, and enquiry is laboriouſly exerted to gain that which thoſe who poſſeſs it are ready to throw away.

To thoſe who are accuſtomed to value every thing by its uſe, and have no ſuch ſuperfluity of time or money as may prompt them to unnatural wants or capricious emulations, nothing appears more improbable or extravagant than the love of curioſities, or that deſire of accumulating trifles, which diſtinguiſhes many by whom no other diſtinction could have ever been obtained.

He that has lived without knowing to what height deſire may be raiſed by vanity, with what rapture baubles are ſnatched out of the hands of rival collectors, how the eagerneſs of one raiſes eagerneſs in another, and one worthleſs purchaſe

es a ſecond neceſſary, may, by paſſing a few
s at an auction, learn more than can be ſhewn
ıany volumes of maxims or eſſays.

ıe advertiſement of a ſale is a ſignal which
nce puts a thouſand hearts in motion, and
ꝛs contenders from every part to the ſcene of
bution. He that had reſolved to buy no
, feels his conſtancy ſubdued; there is now
thing in the catalogue which completes his
ıet, and which he was never before able to

He whoſe ſober reflections inform him, that
lding collection to collection there is no end,
that it is wiſe to leave early that which muſt
ſt imperfect at laſt, yet cannot with-hold him-
from coming to ſee what it is that brings ſo
' together, and when he comes is ſoon over-
red by his habitual paſſion; he is attracted by
', ſeduced by example, and inflamed by com-
on.

hile the ſtores of pride and happineſs are ſur-
l, one looks with longing eyes and gloomy
tenance on that which he deſpairs to gain from
her bidder; another keeps his eye with care
ſettling too long on that which he moſt ear-
' deſires; and another, with more art than
ɛ, depreciates that which he values moſt, in
to have it at an eaſy rate.

ıe novice is often ſurprized to ſee what mi-
and unimportant diſcriminations increaſe or
ıiſh value. An irregular contortion of a tur-
ed ſhell, which common eyes paſs unregarded,
ten times treble its price in the imagination of

philoſophers. Beauty is far from operating upon collectors as upon low and vulgar minds, even where beauty might be thought the only quality that could deſerve notice. Among the ſhells that pleaſe by their variety of colours, if one can be found accidentally deformed by a cloudy ſpot, it is boaſted as the pride of the collection. China is ſometimes purchaſed for little leſs than its weight in gold, only becauſe it is old, though neither leſs brittle, nor better painted than the modern; and brown china is caught up with extaſy, though no reaſon can be imagined for which it ſhould be preferred to common veſſels of common clay.

The fate of prints and coins is equally inexplicable. Some prints are treaſured up as ineſtimably valuable, becauſe the impreſſion was made before the plate was finiſhed. Of coins the price riſes not from the purity of the metal, the excellence of the workmanſhip, the elegance of the legend, or the chronological uſe. A piece, of which neither the inſcription can be read, nor the face diſtinguiſhed, if there remain of it but enough to ſhew that it is rare, will be ſought by contending nations, and digniſy the treaſury in which it ſhall be ſhown.

Whether this curioſity, ſo barren of immediate advantage, and ſo liable to depravation, does more harm or good, is not eaſily decided. Its harm is apparent at the firſt view. It fills the mind with trifling ambition; fixes the attention upon things which have ſeldom any tendency towards virtue or wiſdom; employs in idle inquiries the time that is given for better purpoſes; and often ends in mean

and diſhoneſt practices, when deſire increaſes by indulgence beyond the power of honeſt gratification.

Theſe are the effects of curioſity in exceſs; but what paſſion in exceſs will not become vicious? All indifferent qualities and practices are bad if they are compared with thoſe which are good, and good if they are oppoſed to thoſe that are bad. The pride or the pleaſure of making collections, if it be reſtrained by prudence and morality, produces a pleaſing remiſſion after more laborious ſtudies; furniſhes an amuſement not wholly unprofitable for that part of life, the greater part of many lives, which would otherwiſe be loſt in idleneſs or vice; it produces an uſeful traffick between the induſtry of indigence and the curioſity of wealth; it brings many things to notice that would be neglected; and by fixing the thoughts upon intellectual pleaſures, reſiſts the natural encroachments of ſenſuality, and maintains the mind in her lawful ſuperiority.

NUMB. 57. SATURDAY, *May* 19, 1759.

PRUDENCE is of more frequent uſe than any other intellectual quality; it is exerted on ſlight occaſions, and called into act by the curſory buſineſs of common life.

Whatever is univerſally neceſſary, has been granted to mankind on eaſy terms. Prudence, as it is always wanted, is without great difficulty obtained. It requires neither extenſive view nor profound ſearch, but forces itſelf, by ſpontaneous impulſe, upon a mind neither great nor buſy, neither ingroſſed by vaſt deſigns nor diſtracted by multiplicity of attention.

Prudence operates on life in the ſame manner as rules on compoſition; it produces vigilance rather than elevation, rather prevents loſs than procures advantage; and often eſcapes miſcarriages, but ſeldom reaches either power or honour. It quenches that ardour of enterprize, by which every thing is done that can claim praiſe or admiration; and repreſſes that generous temerity which often fails and often ſucceeds. Rules may obviate faults, but can never confer beauties; and prudence keeps life ſafe, but does not often make it happy. The world is not amazed with prodigies of excellence, but when wit tramples upon rules, and magnanimity breaks the chains of prudence.

One of the moſt prudent of all that have fallen within my obſervation, is my old companion *Sophron*, *who has* paſſed through the world in quiet, by per-

petual

petual adherence to a few plain maxims, and wonders how contention and diſtreſs can ſo often happen.

The firſt principle of *Sophron* is to *run no hazards.* Though he loves money, he is of opinion, that frugality is a more certain ſource of riches than induſtry. It is to no purpoſe that any proſpect of large profit is ſet before him; he believes little about futurity, and does not love to truſt his money out of his ſight, for nobody knows what may happen. He has a ſmall eſtate, which he lets at the old rent, becauſe *it is better to have a little than nothing*; but he rigorouſly demands payment on the ſtated day, for *he that cannot pay one quarter cannot pay two.* If he is told of any improvements in agriculture, he likes the old way, has obſerved that changes very ſeldom anſwer expectation, is of opinion that our forefathers knew how to till the ground as well as we; and concludes with an argument that nothing can overpower, that the expence of planting and fencing is immediate, and the advantage diſtant, and that *he is no wiſe man who will quit a certainty for an uncertainty.*

Another of *Sophron*'s rules is, *to mind no buſineſs but his own.* In the ſtate he is of no party; but hears and ſpeaks of publick affairs with the ſame coldneſs as of the adminiſtration of ſome ancient republick. If any flagrant act of fraud or oppreſſion is mentioned, he hopes that *all is not true that is told:* if miſconduct or corruption puts the nation in a flame, he hopes that *every man means well.* At elections he leaves his dependants to their own choice, and declines to vote himſelf, for every candidate is a good man, whom he is unwilling to oppoſe or offend.

If diſputes happen among his neighbours, he obſerves an invariable and cold neutrality. His punctuality has gained him the reputation of honeſty, and his caution that of wiſdom, and few would refuſe to refer their claims to his award. He might have prevented many expenſive law-ſuits, and quenched many a feud in its firſt ſmoke, but always refuſes the office of arbitration, becauſe he muſt decide againſt one or the other.

With the affairs of other families he is always unacquainted. He ſees eſtates bought and ſold, ſquandered and increaſed, without praiſing the economiſt, or cenſuring the ſpendthrift. He never courts the riſing, leſt they ſhould fall; nor inſults the fallen, leſt they ſhould riſe again. His caution has the appearance of virtue, and all who do not want his help praiſe his benevolence; but if any man ſolicits his aſſiſtance, he has juſt ſent away all his money; and when the petitioner is gone, declares to his family that he is ſorry for his misfortunes, has always looked upon him with particular kindneſs, and therefore could not lend him money, leſt he ſhould deſtroy their friendſhip by the neceſſity of enforcing payment.

Of domeſtick misfortunes he has never heard. When he is told the hundredth time of a gentleman's daughter who has married the coachman, he lifts up his hands with aſtoniſhment, for he always thought her a very ſober girl. When nuptial quarrels, after having filled the country with talk and laughter, at laſt end in ſeparation, he never can conceive how it happened, for he looked upon them as *a happy* couple.

If his advice is aſked, he never gives any particular direction, becauſe events are uncertain, and he will bring no blame upon himſelf; but he takes the conſulter tenderly by the hand, tells him he makes his caſe his own, and adviſes him not to act raſhly, but to weigh the reaſons on both ſides; obſerves, that a man may be as eaſily too haſty as too ſlow, and that as many fail by doing too much as too little; that *a wiſe man has two ears and one tongue*; and *that little ſaid is ſoon amended*; that he could tell him this and that, but that after all every man is the beſt judge of his own affairs.

With this ſome are ſatisfied, and go home with great reverence of *Sophron*'s wiſdom, and none are offended, becauſe every one is left in full poſſeſſion of his own opinion.

Sophron gives no characters. It is equally vain to tell him of vice and virtue, for he has remarked that no man likes to be cenſured, and that very few are delighted with the praiſes of another. He has a few terms which he uſes to all alike. With reſpect to fortune, he believes every family to be in good circumſtances; he never exalts any underſtanding by laviſh praiſe, yet he meets with none but very ſenſible people. Every man is honeſt and hearty, and every woman is a good creature.

Thus *Sophron* creeps along, neither loved nor hated, neither favoured nor oppoſed: he has never attempted to grow rich, for fear of growing poor; and has raiſed no friends, for fear of making enemies.

NUMB. 58. SATURDAY, *May* 26, 1759.

PLEASURE is very ſeldom found where it is ſought. Our brighteſt blazes of gladneſs are commonly kindled by unexpected ſparks. The flowers which ſcatter their odours from time to time in the paths of life, grow up without culture from ſeeds ſcattered by chance.

Nothing is more hopeleſs than a ſcheme of merriment. Wits and humouriſts are brought together from diſtant quarters by preconcerted invitations; they come attended by their admirers prepared to laugh and to applaud: they gaze a-while on each other, aſhamed to be ſilent, and afraid to ſpeak; every man is diſcontented with himſelf, grows angry with thoſe that give him pain, and reſolves that he will contribute nothing to the merriment of ſuch worthleſs company. Wine inflames the general malignity, and changes ſullenneſs to petulance, till at laſt none can bear any longer the preſence of the reſt. They retire to vent their indignation in ſafer places, where they are heard with attention; their importance is reſtored, they recover their good humour, and gladden the night with wit and jocularity.

Merriment is always the effect of a ſudden impreſſion. The jeſt which is expected is already deſtroyed. The moſt active imagination will be ſometimes torpid under the frigid influence of melancholy,

and ſometimes occaſions will be wanting to tempt the mind, however volatile, to ſallies and excurſions. Nothing was ever ſaid with uncommon felicity, but by the co-operation of chance; and, therefore, wit as well as valour muſt be content to ſhare its honours with fortune.

All other pleaſures are equally uncertain; the general remedy of uneaſineſs is change of place; almoſt every one has ſome journey of pleaſure in his mind, with which he flatters his expectation. He that travels in theory has no inconvenience; he has ſhade and ſunſhine at his diſpoſal, and wherever he alights finds tables of plenty and looks of gaiety. Theſe ideas are indulged till the day of departure arrives, the chaiſe is called, and the progreſs of happineſs begins.

A few miles teach him the fallacies of imagination. The road is duſty, the air is ſultry, the horſes are ſluggiſh, and the poſtilion brutal. He longs for the time of dinner, that he may eat and reſt. The inn is crowded, his orders are neglected, and nothing remains but that he devour in haſte what the cook has ſpoiled, and drive on in queſt of better entertainment. He finds at night a more commodious houſe, but the beſt is always worſe than he expected.

He at laſt enters his native province, and reſolves to feaſt his mind with the converſation of his old friends, and the recollection of juvenile frolicks. He ſtops at the houſe of his friend, whom he deſigns to overpower with pleaſure by the unexpected interview. He is not known till he tells his name, and revives the memory of himſelf by a gra-

dual

dual explanation. He is then coldly received, and ceremoniouſly feaſted. He haſtes away to another, whom his affairs have called to a diſtant place, and having ſeen the empty houſe, goes away diſguſted, by a diſappointment which could not be intended becauſe it could not be foreſeen. At the next houſe he finds every face clouded with misfortune, and is regarded with malevolence as an unreaſonable intruder, who comes not to viſit but to inſult them.

It is ſeldom that we find either men or places ſuch as we expect them. He that has pictured a proſpect upon his fancy, will receive little pleaſure from his eyes; he that has anticipated the converſation of a wit, will wonder to what prejudice he owes his reputation. Yet it is neceſſary to hope, though hope ſhould always be deluded; for hope itſelf is happineſs, and its fruſtrations, however frequent, are yet leſs dreadful than its extinction.

NUMB. 59. SATURDAY, *June* 2, 1759.

IN the common enjoyments of life, we cannot very liberally indulge the preſent hour, but by anticipating part of the pleaſure which might have relieved the tediouſneſs of another day; and any uncommon exertion of ſtrength, or perſeverance in labour, is ſucceeded by a long interval of languor and wearineſs. Whatever advantage we ſnatch beyond the certain portion allotted us by nature, is like money ſpent before it is due, which at the time of regular payment will be miſſed and regretted.

Fame, like all other things which are ſuppoſed to give or to encreaſe happineſs, is diſpenſed with the ſame equality of diſtribution. He that is loudly praiſed will be clamorouſly cenſured; he that riſes haſtily into fame will be in danger of ſinking ſuddenly into oblivion.

Of many writers who filled their age with wonder, and whoſe names we find celebrated in the books of their contemporaries, the works are now no longer to be ſeen, or are ſeen only amidſt the lumber of libraries which are ſeldom viſited, where they lie only to ſhew the deceitfulneſs of hope, and the uncertainty of honour.

Of the decline of reputation many cauſes may be aſſigned. It is commonly loſt becauſe it never was deſerved; and was conferred at firſt, not by the ſuf-

frage

ſrage of criticiſm, but by the fondneſs of friendſhip, or ſervility of flattery. The great and popular are very freely applauded, but all ſoon grow weary of echoing to each other a name which has no other claim to notice, but that many mouths are pronouncing it at once.

But many have loſt the final reward of their labours, becauſe they were too haſty to enjoy it. They have laid hold on recent occurrences, and eminent names, and delighted their readers with alluſions and remarks, in which all were intereſted, and to which all therefore were attentive. But the effect ceaſed with its cauſe; the time quickly came when new events drove the former from memory, when the viciſſitudes of the world brought new hopes and fears, transferred the love and hatred of the publick to other agents, and the writer, whoſe works were no longer aſſiſted by gratitude or reſentment, was left to the cold regard of idle curioſity.

He that writes upon general principles, or delivers univerſal truths, may hope to be often read, becauſe his work will be equally uſeful at all times and in every country; but he cannot expect it to be received with eagerneſs, or to ſpread with rapidity, becauſe deſire can have no particular ſtimulation; that which is to be loved long muſt be loved with reaſon rather than with paſſion. He that lays out his labours upon temporary ſubjects, eaſily finds readers, and quickly loſes them; for what ſhould make the book valued when its ſubject *is no more*?

Theſe

Theſe obſervations will ſhew the reaſon why the poem of *Hudibras* is almoſt forgotten, however embelliſhed with ſentiments and diverſified with alluſions, however bright with wit, and however ſolid with truth. The hypocriſy which it detected, and the folly which it ridiculed, have long vaniſhed from publick notice. Thoſe who had felt the miſchief of diſcord, and the tyranny of uſurpation, read it with rapture, for every line brought back to memory ſomething known, and gratified reſentment, by the juſt cenſure of ſomething hated. But the book which was once quoted by princes, and which ſupplied converſation to all the aſſemblies of the gay and witty, is now ſeldom mentioned, and even by thoſe that affect to mention it, is ſeldom read. So vainly is wit laviſhed upon fugitive topicks, ſo little can architecture ſecure duration when the ground is falſe.

NUMB. 60. SATURDAY, *June* 9, 1759.

CRITICISM is a ſtudy by which men grow important and formidable at very ſmall expence. The power of invention has been conferred by nature upon few, and the labour of learning thoſe ſciences which may by mere labour be obtained is too great to be willingly endured; but every man can exert ſuch judgment as he has upon the works of others; and he whom nature has made weak, and idleneſs keeps ignorant, may yet ſupport his vanity by the name of a critick.

I hope it will give comfort to great numbers who are paſſing through the world in obſcurity, when I inform them how eaſily diſtinction may be obtained. All the other powers of literature are coy and haughty, they muſt be long courted, and at laſt are not always gained; but criticiſm is a goddeſs eaſy of acceſs and forward of advance, who will meet the ſlow, and encourage the timorous; the want of meaning ſhe ſupplies with words, and the want of ſpirit ſhe recompenſes with malignity.

This profeſſion has one recommendation peculiar to itſelf, that it gives vent to malignity without real miſchief. No genius was ever blaſted by the breath of criticks. The poiſon which, if confined, would have burſt the heart, fumes away in empty hiſſes, and malice is ſet at eaſe with very little *danger* to merit. The critick is the only man whoſe

triumph

riumph is without another's pain, and whoſe greatneſs does not riſe upon another's ruin.

To a ſtudy at once ſo eaſy and ſo reputable, ſo malicious and ſo harmleſs, it cannot be neceſſary to invite my readers by a long or laboured exhortation; it is ſufficient, ſince all would be criticks if they could, to ſhew by one eminent example that all can be criticks if they will.

Dick Minim, after the common courſe of puerile ſtudies, in which he was no great proficient, was put apprentice to a brewer, with whom he had lived two years, when his uncle died in the city, and left him a large fortune in the ſtocks. *Dick* had for ſix months before uſed the company of the lower players, of whom he had learned to ſcorn a trade, and being now at liberty to follow his genius, he reſolved to be a man of wit and humour. That he might be properly initiated in his new character, he frequented the coffee-houſes near the theatres, where he liſtened very diligently, day after day, to thoſe who talked of language and ſentiments, and unities and cataſtrophes, till by ſlow degrees he began to think that he underſtood ſomething of the ſtage, and hoped in time to talk himſelf.

But he did not truſt ſo much to natural ſagacity, as wholly to neglect the help of books. When the theatres were ſhut, he retired to *Richmond* with a few ſelect writers, whoſe opinions he impreſſed upon his memory by unwearied diligence; and, when he returned with other wits to the town, was able to tell, in very proper phraſes, that the chief buſineſs of art is to copy nature; that a perfect writer is not to be expected, becauſe genius de-

cays

cays as judgment increaſes; that the great art is the art of blotting; and that, according to the rule of *Horace*, every piece ſhould be kept nine years.

Of the great authors he now began to diſplay the characters, laying down as an univerſal poſition, that all had beauties and defects. His opinion was, that *Shakeſpear*, committing himſelf wholly to the impulſe of nature, wanted that correctneſs which learning would have given him; and that *Jonſon*, truſting to learning, did not ſufficiently caſt his eye on nature. He blamed the *ſtanza* of *Spenſer*, and could not bear the *hexameters* of *Sidney*. *Denham* and *Waller* he held the firſt reformers of *Engliſh* numbers; and thought that if *Waller* could have obtained the ſtrength of *Denham*, or *Denham* the ſweetneſs of *Waller*, there had been nothing wanting to complete a poet. He often expreſſed his commiſeration of *Dryden*'s poverty, and his indignation at the age which ſuffered him to write for bread; he repeated with rapture the firſt lines of *All for Love*, but wondered at the corruption of taſte which could bear any thing ſo unnatural as rhyming tragedies. In *Otway* he found uncommon powers of moving the paſſions, but was diſguſted by his general negligence, and blamed him for making a conſpirator his hero; and never concluded his diſquiſition, without remarking how happily the ſound of the clock is made to alarm the audience. *Southern* would have been his favourite, but that he mixes comick with tragick ſcenes, intercepts the natural courſe of the paſſions, and fills the mind with a wild confuſion of mirth and melancholy. The verſification of *Rowe he thought* too melodious for the ſtage, and too little

varied

varied in different paſſions. He made it the great fault of *Congreve*, that all his perſons were wits; and that he always wrote with more art than nature. He conſidered *Cato* rather as a poem than a play, and allowed *Addiſon* to be the complete maſter of allegory and grave humour, but paid no great deference to him as a critick. He thought the chief merit of *Prior* was in his eaſy tales and lighter poems, though he allowed that his *Solomon* had many noble ſentiments elegantly expreſſed. In *Swift* he diſcovered an inimitable vein of irony, and an eaſineſs which all would hope and few would attain. *Pope* he was inclined to degrade from a poet to a verſifier, and thought his numbers rather luſcious than ſweet. He often lamented the neglect of *Phædra* and *Hippolitus*, and wiſhed to ſee the ſtage under better regulations.

Theſe aſſertions paſſed commonly uncontradicted; and if now and then an opponent ſtarted up, he was quickly repreſſed by the ſuffrages of the company, and *Minim* went away from every diſpute with elation of heart and increaſe of confidence.

He now grew conſcious of his abilities, and began to talk of the preſent ſtate of dramatick poetry; wondered what was become of the comick genius which ſupplied our anceſtors with wit and pleaſantry, and why no writer could be found that durſt now venture beyond a farce. He ſaw no reaſon for thinking that the vein of humour was exhauſted, ſince we live in a country where liberty ſuffers every character to ſpread itſelf to its utmoſt bulk, and which therefore produces more originals than all the reſt of the world together. Of tragedy he con-

cluded buſineſs to be the ſoul, and yet often hinted that love predominates too much upon the modern ſtage.

He was now an acknowledged critick, and had his own ſeat in a coffee-houſe, and headed a party in the pit. *Minim* has more vanity than ill-nature, and ſeldom deſires to do much miſchief; he will perhaps murmur a little in the ear of him that ſits next him, but endeavours to influence the audience to favour, by clapping when an actor exclaims *ye gods*, or laments the miſery of his country.

By degrees he was admitted to rehearſals, and many of his friends are of opinion, that our preſent poets are indebted to him for their happieſt thoughts; by his contrivance the bell was rung twice in *Barbaroſſa*, and by his perſuaſion the author of *Cleone* concluded his play without a couplet; for what can be more abſurd, ſaid *Minim*, than that part of a play ſhould be rhymed, and part written in blank verſe? and by what acquiſition of faculties is the ſpeaker, who never could find rhymes before, enabled to rhyme at the concluſion of an act?

He is the great inveſtigator of hidden beauties, and is particularly delighted when he finds *the ſound an echo to the ſenſe*. He has read all our poets with particular attention to this delicacy of verſification, and wonders at the ſupineneſs with which their works have been hitherto peruſed, ſo that no man has found the ſound of a drum in this diſtich,

> "When pulpit, drum eccleſiaſtic,
> "Was beat with fiſt inſtead of a ſtick;"

and

that the wonderful lines upon honour and a ıle have hitherto paſſed without notice.

" Honour is like the glaſſy bubble,
" Which coſts philoſophers ſuch trouble;
" Where one part crack'd, the whole does fly,
" And wits are crack'd to find out why."

eſe verſes, ſays *Minim*, we have two ſtriking nmodations of the ſound to the ſenſe. It is ſſible to utter the two lines emphatically with- ın act like that which they deſcribe; *bubble trouble* cauſing a momentary inflation of the ss by the retention of the breath, which is after- s forcibly emitted, as in the practice of *blowing es.* But the greateſt excellence is in the third which is *crack'd* in the middle to expreſs a ;, and then ſhivers into monoſyllables. Yet has diamond lain neglected with common ſtones, among the innumerable admirers of *Hudibras* ıbſervation of this ſuperlative paſſage has been ved for the ſagacity of *Minim*.

NUMB. 61. SATURDAY, *June* 16, 1759.

MR. *Minim* had now advanced himſelf to the zenith of critical reputation; when he was in the pit, every eye in the boxes was fixed upon him; when he entered his coffee-houſe, he was ſurrounded by circles of candidates, who paſſed their noviciate of literature under his tuition; his opinion was aſked by all who had no opinion of their own, and yet loved to debate and decide; and no compoſition was ſuppoſed to paſs in ſafety to poſterity, till it had been ſecured by *Minim*'s approbation.

Minim profeſſes great admiration of the wiſdom and munificence by which the academies of the continent were raiſed, and often wiſhes for ſome ſtandard of taſte, for ſome tribunal, to which merit may appeal from caprice, prejudice, and malignity. He has formed a plan for an academy of criticiſm, where every work of imagination may be read before it is printed, and which ſhall authoritatively direct the theatres what pieces to receive or reject, to exclude or to revive.

Such an inſtitution would, in *Dick*'s opinion, ſpread the fame of *Engliſh* literature over *Europe*, and make *London* the metropolis of elegance and politeneſs, the place to which the learned and ingenious of all countries would repair for inſtruction and improvement, and where nothing would any longer be applauded or endured that was not conformed

formed to the niceſt rules, and finiſhed with the higheſt elegance.

Till ſome happy conjunction of the planets ſhall diſpoſe our princes or miniſters to make themſelves immortal by ſuch an academy, *Minim* contents himſelf to preſide four nights in a week in a critical ſociety ſelected by himſelf, where he is heard without contradiction, and whence his judgment is diſſeminated through the great vulgar and the ſmall.

When he is placed in the chair of criticiſm, he declares loudly for the noble ſimplicity of our anceſtors, in oppoſition to the petty refinements, and ornamental luxuriance. Sometimes he is ſunk in deſpair, and perceives falſe delicacy daily gaining ground, and ſometimes brightens his countenance with a gleam of hope, and predicts the revival of the true ſublime. He then fulminates his loudeſt cenſures againſt the monkiſh barbarity of rhyme; wonders how beings that pretend to reaſon can be pleaſed with one line always ending like another; tells how unjuſtly and unnaturally ſenſe is ſacrificed to ſound; how often the beſt thoughts are mangled by the neceſſity of confining or extending them to the dimenſions of a couplet; and rejoices that genius has, in our days, ſhaken off the ſhackles which had encumbered it ſo long. Yet he allows that rhyme may ſometimes be borne, if the lines be often broken and the pauſes judiciouſly diverſified.

From blank verſe he makes an eaſy tranſition to *Milton*, whom he produces as an example of the ſlow advance of laſting reputation. *Milton* is the only writer in whoſe books *Minim* can read for ever without wearineſs. What cauſe it is that exempts this pleaſure

from ſatiety he has long and diligently enquired, and believes it to conſiſt in the perpetual variation of the numbers, by which the ear is gratified and the attention awakened. The lines that are commonly thought rugged and unmuſical, he conceives to have been written to temper the melodious luxury of the reſt, or to expreſs things by a proper cadence: for he ſcarcely finds a verſe that has not this favourite beauty; he declares that he could ſhiver in a hot-houſe when he reads that

" the ground
" Burns frore, and cold performs th' effect of fire;

and that when *Milton* bewails his blindneſs; the verſe

" So thick a drop ſerene has quench'd theſe orbs,"

has, he knows not how, ſomething that ſtrikes him with an obſcure ſenſation like that which he fancies would be felt from the ſound of darkneſs.

Minim is not ſo confident of his rules of judgment as not very eagerly to catch new light from the name of the author. He is commonly ſo prudent as to ſpare thoſe whom he cannot reſiſt, unleſs, as will ſometimes happen, he finds the publick combined againſt them. But a freſh pretender to fame he is ſtrongly inclined to cenſure, till his own honour requires that he commend him. Till he knows the ſucceſs of a compoſition, he intrenches himſelf in general terms; there are ſome new thoughts and beautiful paſſages, but there is likewiſe much which he would have adviſed the author to expunge. He has ſeveral favourite epithets, of which he has never

ſettled the meaning, but which are very commodiouſly applied to books which he has not read, or cannot underſtand. One is *manly*, another is *dry*, another *ſtiff*, and another *flimzy*; ſometimes he diſcovers delicacy of ſtyle, and ſometimes meets with *ſtrange expreſſions*.

He is never ſo great, or ſo happy, as when a youth of promiſing parts is brought to receive his directions for the proſecution of his ſtudies. He then puts on a very ſerious air; he adviſes the pupil to read none but the beſt authors, and, when he finds one congenial to his own mind, to ſtudy his beauties, but avoid his faults, and, when he ſits down to write, to conſider how his favourite author would think at the preſent time on the preſent occaſion. He exhorts him to catch thoſe moments when he finds his thoughts expanded and his genius exalted, but to take care leſt imagination hurry him beyond the bounds of nature. He holds diligence the mother of ſucceſs; yet enjoins him, with great earneſtneſs, not to read more than he can digeſt, and not to confuſe his mind by purſuing ſtudies of contrary tendencies. He tells him, that every man has his genius, and that *Cicero* could never be a poet. The boy retires illuminated, reſolves to follow his genius, and to think how *Milton* would have thought: and *Minim* feaſts upon his own beneficence till another day brings another pupil.

NUMB. 62. SATURDAY, *June* 23, 1759.

To the IDLER.

SIR,

AN opinion prevails almoſt univerſally in the world, that he who has money has every thing. This is not a modern paradox, or the tenet of a ſmall and obſcure ſect, but a perſuaſion which appears to have operated upon moſt minds in all ages, and which is ſupported by authorities ſo numerous and ſo cogent, that nothing but long experience could have given me confidence to queſtion its truth.

But experience is the teſt by which all the philoſophers of the preſent age agree, that ſpeculation muſt be tried; and I may be therefore allowed to doubt the power of money, ſince I have been a long time rich, and have not yet found that riches can make me happy.

My father was a farmer, neither wealthy nor indigent, who gave me a better education than was ſuitable to my birth, becauſe my uncle in the city deſigned me for his heir, and deſired that I might be bred a gentleman. My uncle's wealth was the perpetual ſubject of converſation in the houſe; and when any little misfortune befell us, or any mortification dejected us, my father always exhorted me to hold up my head, for my uncle would never marry.

My uncle, indeed, kept his promiſe. Having his mind completely buſied between his warehouſe and the 'Change, he felt no tediouſneſs of life, nor any want of domeſtick amuſements. When my father died, he received me kindly; but, after a few months, finding no great pleaſure in the converſation of each other, we parted, and he remitted me a ſmall annuity, on which I lived a quiet and ſtudious life, without any wiſh to grow great by the death of my benefactor.

But though I never ſuffered any malignant impatience to take hold on my mind, I could not forbear ſometimes to imagine to myſelf the pleaſure of being rich; and when I read of diverſions and magnificence, reſolved to try, when time ſhould put the trial in my power, what pleaſure they could afford.

My uncle, in the latter ſpring of his life, when his ruddy cheek and his firm nerves promiſed him a long and healthy age, died of an apoplexy. His death gave me neither joy nor ſorrow. He did me good, and I regarded him with gratitude; but I could not pleaſe him, and therefore could not love him.

He had the policy of little minds, who love to ſurprize; and having always repreſented his fortune as leſs than it was, had, I ſuppoſe, often gratified himſelf with thinking, how I ſhould be delighted to find myſelf twice as rich as I expected. My wealth was ſuch as exceeded all the ſchemes of expence which I had formed, and I ſoon began to expand my thoughts, and look round for ſome purchaſe of felicity.

The

The moſt ſtriking effect of riches is the ſplendour of dreſs, which every man has obſerved to enforce reſpect, and facilitate reception; and my firſt deſire was to be fine. I ſent for a taylor who was employed by the nobility, and ordered ſuch a ſuit of clothes as I had often looked on with involuntary ſubmiſſion, and am aſhamed to remember with what flutters of expectation I waited for the hour when I ſhould iſſue forth in all the ſplendour of embroidery. The clothes were brought, and for three days I obſerved many eyes turned towards me as I paſſed: but I felt myſelf obſtructed in the common intercourſe of civility, by an uneaſy conſciouſneſs of my new appearance; as I thought myſelf more obſerved, I was more anxious about my mien and behaviour; and the mien which is formed by care is commonly ridiculous. A ſhort time accuſtomed me to myſelf, and my dreſs was without pain, and without pleaſure.

For a little while I tried to be a rake, but I began too late; and having by nature no turn for a frolick, was in great danger of ending in a drunkard. A fever, in which not one of my companions paid me a viſit, gave me time for reflection. I found that there was no great pleaſure in breaking windows and lying in the round-houſe; and reſolved to aſſociate no longer with thoſe whom, though I had treated and bailed them, I could not make friends.

I then changed my meaſures, kept running horſes, and had the comfort of ſeeing my name very often in the news. I had a cheſnut horſe, the grandſon of *Childers*, who won four plates, and ten by-matches; and

and a bay filly, who carried off the five years old plate, and was expected to perform much greater exploits, when my groom broke her wind, becauſe I happened to catch him ſelling oats for beer. This happineſs was ſoon at an end; there was no pleaſure when I loſt, and when I won I could not much exalt myſelf by the virtues of my horſe. I grew aſhamed of the company of jockey lords, and reſolved to ſpend no more of my time in the ſtable.

It was now known that I had money and would ſpend it, and I paſſed four months in the company of architects, whoſe whole buſineſs was to perſuade me to build a houſe. I told them that I had more room than I wanted, but could not get rid of their importunities. A new plan was brought me every morning; till at laſt my conſtancy was overpowered, and I began to build. The happineſs of building laſted but a little while, for though I love to ſpend, I hate to be cheated; and I ſoon found, that to build is to be robbed.

How I proceed in the purſuit of happineſs, you ſhall hear when I find myſelf diſpoſed to write.

I am, SIR, &c.

TIM RANGER.

NUMB. 63. SATURDAY, *June* 30, 1759.

THE natural progreſs of the works of men is from rudeneſs to convenience, from convenience to elegance, and from elegance to nicety.

The firſt labour is enforced by neceſſity. The ſavage finds himſelf incommoded by heat and cold, by rain and wind; he ſhelters himſelf in the hollow of a rock, and learns to dig a cave where there was none before. He finds the ſun and the wind excluded by the thicket, and when the accidents of the chace, or the convenience of paſturage leads him into more open places, he forms a thicket for himſelf, by planting ſtakes at proper diſtances, and laying branches from one to another.

The next gradation of ſkill and induſtry produces a houſe, cloſed with doors, and divided by partitions; and apartments are multiplied and diſpoſed according to the various degrees of power or invention; improvement ſucceeds improvement, as he that is freed from a greater evil grows impatient of a leſs, till eaſe in time is advanced to pleaſure.

The mind ſet free from the importunities of natural want, gains leiſure to go in ſearch of ſuperfluous gratifications, and adds to the uſes of habitation the delights of proſpect. Then begins the reign of ſymmetry; orders of architecture are invented, and one part of the edifice is conformed to another, without any other reaſon, than that the eye may not be offended.

The

The paſſage is very ſhort from elegance to luxury. *Doric* and *Corinthian* columns are ſoon ſucceeded by gilt cornices, inlaid floors, and petty ornaments, which ſhew rather the wealth than the taſte of the poſſeſſor.

Language proceeds, like every thing elſe, through improvement to degeneracy. The rovers who firſt take poſſeſſion of a country, having not many ideas, and thoſe not nicely modified or diſcriminated, were contented if by general terms and abrupt ſentences they could make their thoughts known to one another; as life begins to be more regulated, and property to become limited, diſputes muſt be decided, and claims adjuſted; the differences of things are noted, and diſtinctneſs and propriety of expreſſion become neceſſary. In time, happineſs and plenty give riſe to curioſity, and the ſciences are cultivated for eaſe and pleaſure; to the arts which are now to be taught, emulation ſoon adds the art of teaching; and the ſtudious and ambitious contend not only who ſhall think beſt, but who ſhall tell their thoughts in the moſt pleaſing manner.

Then begin the arts of rhetorick and poetry, the regulation of figures, the ſelection of words, the modulation of periods, the graces of tranſition, the complication of clauſes, and all the delicacies of ſtyle and ſubtilties of compoſition, uſeful while they advance perſpicuity, and laudable while they increaſe pleaſure, but eaſy to be refined by needleſs ſcrupuloſity till they ſhall more embarraſs the writer than aſſiſt the reader or delight him.

The firſt ſtate is commonly antecedent to the practice of writing; the ignorant eſſays of imperfect

perfect diction paſs away with the ſavage generation that uttered them. No nation can trace their language beyond the ſecond period, and even of that it does not often happen that many monuments remain.

The fate of the *Engliſh* tongue is like that of others. We know nothing of the ſcanty jargon of our barbarous anceſtors, but we have ſpecimens of our language when it began to be adapted to civil and religious purpoſes, and find it ſuch as might naturally be expected, artleſs and ſimple, unconnected and conciſe. The writers ſeem to have deſired little more than to be underſtood, and perhaps ſeldom aſpired to the praiſe of pleaſing. Their verſes were conſidered chiefly as memorial, and therefore did not differ from proſe but by the meaſure or the rhyme.

In this ſtate, varied a little according to the different purpoſes or abilities of writers, our language may be ſaid to have continued to the time of *Gower*, whom *Chaucer* calls his maſter, and who, however obſcured by his ſcholar's popularity, ſeems juſtly to claim the honour which has been hitherto denied him, of ſhewing his countrymen that ſomething more was to be deſired, and that *Engliſh* verſe might be exalted into poetry.

From the time of *Gower* and *Chaucer*, the *Engliſh* writers have ſtudied elegance, and advanced their language, by ſucceſſive improvements, to as much harmony as it can eaſily receive, and as much copiouſneſs as human knowledge has hitherto required. Theſe advances have not been made at *all times* with the ſame diligence or the ſame ſuc-

ceſs.

ceſs. Negligence has ſuſpended the courſe of improvement, or affectation turned it aſide; time has elapſed with little change, or change has been made without amendment. But elegance has been long kept in view with attention as near to conſtancy as life permits, till every man now endeavours to excel others in accuracy, or outſhine them in ſplendour of ſtyle, and the danger is, leſt care ſhould too ſoon paſs to affectation.

NUMB. 64. SATURDAY, *July* 7, 1759.

To the IDLER.

SIR,

AS nature has made every man deſirous of happineſs, I flatter myſelf, that you and your readers cannot but feel ſome curioſity to know the ſequel of my ſtory; for though by trying the different ſchemes of pleaſure, I have yet found nothing in which I could finally acquieſce; yet the narrative of my attempts will not be wholly without uſe, ſince we always approach nearer to truth as we detect more and more varieties of error.

When I had ſold my racers, and put the orders of architecture out of my head, my next reſolution was to be a *fine gentleman*. I frequented the polite coffee-houſes, grew acquainted with all the men of humour, and gained the right of bowing familiarly

to half the nobility. In this new ſcene of life my great labour was to learn to laugh. I had been uſed to conſider laughter as the effect of merriment, but I ſoon learned that it is one of the arts of adulation, and, from laughing only to ſhew that I was pleaſed, I now began to laugh when I wiſhed to pleaſe. This was at firſt very difficult. I ſometimes heard the ſtory with dull indifference, and, not exalting myſelf to merriment by due gradations, burſt out ſuddenly into an awkward noiſe, which was not always favourably interpreted. Sometimes I was behind the reſt of the company, and loſt the grace of laughing by delay, and ſometimes when I began at the right time was deficient in loudneſs or in length. But by diligent imitation of the beſt models, I attained at laſt ſuch flexibility of muſcles, that I was always a welcome auditor of a ſtory, and got the reputation of a good-natured fellow.

This was ſomething; but much more was to be done, that I might be univerſally allowed to be a fine gentleman. I appeared at court on all publick days; betted at gaming tables, and played at all the routs of eminence. I went every night to the opera, took a fidler of diſputed merit under my protection, became the head of a muſical faction, and had ſometimes concerts at my own houſe. I once thought to have attained the higheſt rank of elegance, by taking a foreign ſinger into keeping. But my favourite fidler contrived to be arreſted on the night of a concert, for a finer ſuit of clothes than I had ever preſumed to wear, and I loſt all the fame of patronage by refuſing to bail him.

My next ambition was to ſit for my picture. I ſpent a whole winter in going from painter to painter, to beſpeak a whole length of one, and a half length of another; I talked of nothing but attitudes, draperies, and proper lights; took my friends to ſee the pictures after every ſitting; heard every day of a wonderful performer in crayons and miniature, and ſent my pictures to be copied; was told by the judges that they were not like, and was recommended to other artiſts. At length, being not able to pleaſe my friends, I grew leſs pleaſed myſelf, and at laſt reſolved to think no more about it.

It was impoſſible to live in total idleneſs: and wandering about in ſearch of ſomething to do, I was invited to a weekly meeting of virtuoſos, and felt myſelf inſtantaneouſly ſeized with an unextinguiſhable ardour for all natural curioſities. I ran from auction to auction, became a critick in ſhells and foſſils, bought a *Hortus ſiccus* of ineſtimable value, and purchaſed a ſecret art of preſerving inſects, which made my collection the envy of the other philoſophers. I found this pleaſure mingled with much vexation. All the faults of my life were for nine months circulated through the town with the moſt active malignity, becauſe I happened to catch a moth of peculiar variegation; and becauſe I once out-bid all the lovers of ſhells and carried off a nautilus, it was hinted that the validity of my uncle's will ought to be diſputed. I will not deny that I was very proud both of the moth and of the ſhell, and gratified myſelf

with the envy of my companions, perhaps more than became a benevolent being. But in time I grew weary of being hated for that which produced no advantage, gave my ſhells to children that wanted play-things, and ſuppreſſed the art of drying butterflies, becauſe I would not tempt idleneſs and cruelty to kill them.

I now began to feel life tedious, and wiſhed to ſtore myſelf with friends, with whom I might grow old in the interchange of benevolence. I had obſerved that popularity was moſt eaſily gained by an open table, and therefore hired a French cook, furniſhed my ſide-board with great magnificence, filled my cellar with wines of pompous appellations, bought every thing that was dear before it was good, and invited all thoſe who were moſt famous for judging of a dinner. In three weeks my cook gave me warning, and, upon enquiry, told me that Lord *Queaſy*, who dined with me the day before, had ſent him an offer of double wages. My pride prevailed, I raiſed his wages, and invited his lordſhip to another feaſt. I love plain meat, and was therefore ſoon weary of ſpreading a table of which I could not partake. I found that my gueſts, when they went away, criticiſed their entertainment, and cenſured my profuſion; my cook thought himſelf neceſſary, and took upon him the direction of the houſe; and I could not rid myſelf of flatterers, or break from ſlavery, but by ſhutting up my houſe, and declaring my reſolution to live in lodgings.

After

After all this, tell me, dear *Idler*, what I muſt do next; I have health, I have money, and hope that I have underſtanding; yet, with all theſe, I have never been able to paſs a ſingle day which I did not wiſh at an end before ſun-ſet. Tell me, dear *Idler*, what I ſhall do. I am

Your humble ſervant,

TIM. RANGER.

NUMB. 65. SATURDAY, *July* 14, 1759.

THE ſequel of *Clarendon*'s hiſtory, at laſt happily publiſhed, is an acceſſion to *Engliſh* literature equally agreeable to the admirers of elegance and the lovers of truth; many doubtful facts may now be aſcertained, and many queſtions, after long debate, may be determined by deciſive authority. He that records tranſactions in which himſelf was engaged, has not only an opportunity of knowing innumerable particulars which eſcape ſpectators, but has his natural powers exalted by that ardour which always riſes at the remembrance of our own importance, and by which every man is enabled to relate his own actions better than another's.

The difficulties through which this work has ſtruggled into light, and the delays with which our hopes have been long mocked, naturally lead the mind to the conſideration of the common fate of poſthumous compoſitions.

He who ſees himſelf ſurrounded by admirers, and whoſe vanity is hourly feaſted with all the luxuries of ſtudied praiſe, is eaſily perſuaded that his influence will be extended beyond his life; that they who cringe in his preſence will reverence his memory; and that thoſe who are proud to be numbered among his friends, will endeavour to vindicate his choice by zeal for his reputation.

With hopes like theſe, to the executors of *Swift* was committed the hiſtory of the laſt years of Queen *Anne*, and to thoſe of *Pope* the works which remained unprinted in his cloſet. The performances of *Pope* were burnt by thoſe whom he had perhaps ſelected from all mankind as moſt likely to publiſh them; and the hiſtory had likewiſe periſhed, had not a ſtraggling tranſcript fallen into buſy hands.

The papers left in the cloſet of *Peireſc* ſupplied his heirs with a whole winter's fuel; and many of the labours of the learned Biſhop *Lloyd* were conſumed in the kitchen of his deſcendants.

Some works, indeed, have eſcaped total deſtruction, but yet have had reaſon to lament the fate of orphans expoſed to the frauds of unfaithful guardians. How *Hale* would have borne the mutilations which his *Pleas of the Crown* have ſuffered from the editor, they who know his character will eaſily conceive.

The

The original copy of *Burnet*'s hiſtory, though romiſed to ſome publick * library, has been never ven; and who then can prove the fidelity of the ublication, when the authenticity of *Clarendon*'s ſtory, though printed with the ſanction of one of e firſt univerſities of the world, had not an unexcted manuſcript been happily diſcovered, would, th the help of factious credulity, have been brought to queſtion by the two loweſt of all human beings, ſcribbler for a party, and a commiſſioner of exſe?

Vanity is often no leſs miſchievous than negli-nce or diſhoneſty. He that poſſeſſes a valuable anuſcript, hopes to raiſe its eſteem by conceal-ent, and delights in the diſtinction which he ima-nes himſelf to obtain by keeping the key of a aſure which he neither uſes nor imparts. From m it falls to ſome other owner, leſs vain, but more gligent, who conſiders it as uſeleſs lumber, and ls himſelf of the incumbrance.

Yet there are ſome works which the authors muſt nſign unpubliſhed to poſterity, however uncertain the event, however hopeleſs be the truſt. He it writes the hiſtory of his own times, if he adres ſteadily to truth, will write that which his own nes will not eaſily endure. He muſt be content repoſite his book till all private paſſions ſhall iſe, and love and hatred give way to curioſity.

But many leave the labours of half their life to ir executors and to chance, becauſe they will not

* It would be proper to repoſite, in ſome publick place, the nuſcript of *Clarendon*, which has not eſcaped all ſuſpicion of aithful publication.

ſend them abroad unfiniſhed, and are unable to finiſh them, having preſcribed to themſelves ſuch a degree of exactneſs as human diligence can ſcarcely attain. *Lloyd*, ſays *Burnet*, *did not lay out his learning with the ſame diligence as he laid it in.* He was always heſitating and enquiring, raiſing objections and removing them, and waiting for clearer light and fuller diſcovery. *Baker*, after many years paſſed in biography, left his manuſcripts to be buried in a library, becauſe that was imperfect which could never be perfected.

Of theſe learned men, let thoſe who aſpire to the ſame praiſe, imitate the diligence, and avoid the ſcrupuloſity. Let it be always remembered that life is ſhort, that knowledge is endleſs, and that many doubts deſerve not to be cleared. Let thoſe whom nature and ſtudy have qualified to teach mankind, tell us what they have learned while they are yet able to tell it, and truſt their reputation only to themſelves.

NUMB. 66. SATURDAY, *July* 21, 1759.

NO complaint is more frequently repeated among the learned, than that of the waſte made by time among the labours of antiquity. Of thoſe who once filled the civilized world with their renown, nothing is now left but their names, which are left only to raiſe deſires that never can be ſatisfied, and ſorrow which never can be comforted.

Had all the writings of the ancients been faithfully delivered down from age to age, had the *Alexandrian* library been ſpared, and the *Palatine* repoſitories remained unimpaired, how much might we have known of which we are now doomed to be ignorant! how many laborious enquiries, and dark conjectures, how many collations of broken hints and mutilated paſſages, might have been ſpared! We ſhould have known the ſucceſſions of princes, the revolutions of empire, the actions of the great, and opinions of the wiſe, the laws and conſtitutions of every ſtate, and the arts by which publick grandeur and happineſs are acquired and preſerved; we ſhould have traced the progreſs of life, ſeen colonies from diſtant regions take poſſeſſion of *European* deſerts, and tròops of ſavages ſettled into communities by the deſire of keeping what they had acquired; we ſhould have traced the gradations of civility, and travelled upward to the original of things by the light of hiſtory, till in remoter times it had glimmered in fable, and at laſt ſunk into darkneſs.

If the works of imagination had been leſs diminiſhed, it is likely that all future times might have been ſupplied with inexhauſtible amuſement by the fictions of antiquity. The tragedies of *Sophocles* and *Euripides* would have ſhewn all the ſtronger paſſions in all their diverſities; and the comedies of *Menander* would have furniſhed all the maxims of domeſtick life. Nothing would have been neceſſary to moral wiſdom but to have ſtudied theſe great maſters, whoſe knowledge would have guided doubt, and whoſe authority would have ſilenced cavils.

Such are the thoughts that riſe in every ſtudent, when his curioſity is eluded, and his ſearches are fruſtrated; yet it may perhaps be doubted, whether our complaints are not ſometimes inconſiderate, and whether we do not imagine more evil than we feel. Of the ancients, enough remains to excite our emulation, and direct our endeavours. Many of the works which time has left us, we know to have been thoſe that were moſt eſteemed, and which antiquity itſelf conſidered as models; ſo that, having the originals, we may without much regret loſe the imitations. The obſcurity which the want of contemporary writers often produces, only darkens ſingle paſſages, and thoſe commonly of ſlight importance. The general tendency of every piece may be known, and though that diligence deſerves praiſe which leaves nothing unexamined, yet its miſcarriages are not much to be lamented; for the moſt uſeful truths are always univerſal, and unconnected with accidents and cuſtoms.

Such is the general conſpiracy of human nature againſt contemporary merit, that if we had inherited

from

rom antiquity enough to afford employment for the aborious, and amuſement for the idle, I know not vhat room would have been left for modern genius or modern induſtry; almoſt every ſubject would have been pre-occupied, and every ſtyle would have been fixed by a precedent from which few would have ventured to depart. Every writer would have had a rival, whoſe ſuperiority was already acknowledged, and to whoſe fame his work would, even before it was ſeen, be marked out for a ſacrifice.

We ſee how little the united experience of mankind have been able to add to the heroick characters diſplayed by *Homer*, and how few incidents the fertile imagination of modern *Italy* has yet produced, which may not be found in the *Iliad* and *Odyſſey*. It is likely, that if all the works of the *Athenian* philoſophers had been extant, *Malbranche* and *Locke* would have been condemned to be ſilent readers of the ancient metaphyſicians; and it is apparent, that if the old writers had all remained, the *Idler* could not have written a diſquiſition on the loſs.

NUMB. 67. SATURDAY, *July* 28, 1759.

To the IDLER.

SIR,

IN the obſervations which you have made on the various opinions and purſuits of mankind, you muſt often, in literary converſations, have met with men who conſider diſſipation as the great enemy of the intellect; and maintain, that in proportion as the ſtudent keeps himſelf within the bounds of a ſettled plan, he will more certainly advance in ſcience.

This opinion is, perhaps, generally true; yet, when we contemplate the inquiſitive nature of the human mind, and its perpetual impatience of all reſtraint, it may be doubted whether the faculties may not be contracted by confining the attention; and whether it may not ſometimes be proper to riſque the certainty of little for the chance of much. Acquiſitions of knowledge, like blazes of genius, are often fortuitous. Thoſe who had propoſed to themſelves a methodical courſe of reading, light by accident on a new book, which ſeizes their thoughts and kindles their curioſity, and opens an unexpected proſpect, to which the way which they had preſcribed to themſelves would never have conducted them.

To enforce and illuſtrate my meaning, I have ſent you a journal of three days employment, found among

among the papers of a late intimate acquaintance; who, as will plainly appear, was a man of vaſt deſigns, and of vaſt performances, though he ſometimes deſigned one thing and performed another. I allow that the *Spectator*'s inimitable productions of this kind may well diſcourage all ſubſequent journaliſts; but, as the ſubject of this is different from that of any which the *Spectator* has given us, I leave it to you to publiſh or ſuppreſs it.

Mem. The following three days I propoſe to give up to reading; and intend, after all the delays which have obtruded themſelves upon me, to finiſh my *Eſſay on the Extent of the Mental Powers*; to reviſe my *Treatiſe on Logick*; to begin the *Epick* which I have long projected; to proceed in my peruſal of the *Scriptures* with *Grotius's Comment*; and at my leiſure to regale myſelf with the works of claſſicks, ancient and modern, and to finiſh my *Ode to Aſtronomy*.

Monday.] Deſigned to riſe at ſix, but, by my ſervant's lazineſs, my fire was not lighted before eight, when I dropped into a ſlumber that laſted till nine; at which time I roſe, and, after breakfaſt, at ten ſat down to ſtudy, propoſing to begin upon my *Eſſay*; but finding occaſion to conſult a paſſage in *Plato*, was abſorbed in the peruſal of the *republick* till twelve. I had neglected to forbid company, and now enters *Tom Careleſs*, who, after half an hour's chat, inſiſted upon my going with him to enjoy an abſurd character, that he had appointed, by an advertiſement, to meet him at a particular coffee-houſe. After we had for ſome time entertained our-

ſelves

ſelves with him, we ſallied out, deſigning each to repair to his home; but, as it fell out, coming up in the ſtreet to a man, whoſe ſteel by his ſide declared him a butcher, we overheard him opening an addreſs to a genteeliſh ſort of young Lady, whom he walked with: "Miſs, though your father is maſter "of a coal-lighter, and you will be a great fortune, "'tis true; yet I wiſh I may be cut into quarters "if it is not only love, and not lucre of gain, that "is my motive for offering terms of marriage." As this lover proceeded in his ſpeech, he miſled us the length of three ſtreets, in admiration at the unlimited power of the tender paſſion, that could ſoften even the heart of a butcher. We then adjourned to a tavern, and from thence to one of the publick gardens, where I was regaled with a moſt amuſing variety of men poſſeſſing great talents, ſo diſcoloured by affectation, that they only made them eminently ridiculous; ſhallow things, who, by continual diſſipation, had annihilated the few ideas nature had given them, and yet were celebrated for wonderful pretty gentlemen; young ladies extolled for their wit, becauſe they were handſome; illiterate empty women as well as men, in high life, admired for their knowledge, from their being reſolutely poſitive; and women of real underſtanding ſo far from pleaſing the polite million, that they frightened them away, and were left ſolitary. When we quitted this entertaining ſcene, *Tom* preſſed me, irreſiſtibly, to ſup with him. I reached home at twelve, and then reflected, that though indeed I had, by remarking various characters, improved my inſight into human nature, yet ſtill I had neglected

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the ſtudies propoſed, and accordingly took up my *Treatiſe on Logick*, to give it the intended reviſal, but found my ſpirits too much agitated, and could not forbear a few ſatirical lines, under the title of *The Evening's Walk*.

Tueſday.] At breakfaſt, ſeeing my *Ode to Aſtronomy* lying on my deſk, I was ſtruck with a train of ideas, that I thought might contribute to its improvement. I immediately rang my bell to forbid all viſitants, when my ſervant opened the door, with, "Sir, Mr. *Jeffery Gape*." My cup dropped out of one hand, and my poem out of the other. I could ſcarce aſk him to ſit; he told me he was going to walk, but as there was a likelihood of rain, he would ſit with me; he ſaid, he intended at firſt to have called at Mr. *Vacant*'s, but as he had not ſeen me a great while, he did not mind coming out of his way to wait on me; I made him a bow, but thanks for the favour ſtuck in my throat. I aſked him if he had been to the coffee-houſe; he replied, two hours.

Under the oppreſſion of this dull interruption, I ſat looking wiſhfully at the clock; for which, to increaſe my ſatisfaction, I had choſen the inſcription, *Art is long, and life is ſhort*; exchanging queſtions and anſwers at long intervals, and not without ſome hints that the weather-glaſs promiſed fair weather. At half an hour after three he told me he would treſpaſs on me for a dinner, and deſired me to ſend to his houſe for a bundle of papers, about incloſing a common upon his eſtate, which he would read to me in the evening. I declared myſelf buſy, and Mr. *Gape* went away.

Having dined, to compoſe my chagrin I took up *Virgil*, and ſeveral other claſſicks, but could not calm my mind, or proceed in my ſcheme. At about five I laid my hand on a bible that lay on my table, at firſt with coldneſs and inſenſibility; but was imperceptibly engaged in a cloſe attention to its ſublime morality, and felt my heart expanded by warm philanthropy, and exalted to dignity of ſentiment; I then cenſured my too great ſolicitude, and my diſguſt conceived at my acquaintance, who had been ſo far from deſigning to offend, that he only meant to ſhew kindneſs and reſpect. In this ſtrain of mind I wrote *An Eſſay on Benevolence*, and *An Elegy on ſublunary Diſappointments*. When I had finiſhed theſe, at eleven, I ſupped, and recollected how little I had adhered to my plan, and almoſt queſtioned the poſſibility of purſuing any ſettled and uniform deſign; however, I was not ſo far perſuaded of the truth of theſe ſuggeſtions, but that I reſolved to try once more at my ſcheme. As I obſerved the moon ſhining through my window, from a calm and bright ſky ſpangled with innumerable ſtars, I indulged a pleaſing meditation on the ſplendid ſcene, and finiſhed my *Ode to Aſtronomy*.

Wedneſday.] Roſe at ſeven, and employed three hours in peruſal of the *ſcriptures* with *Grotius's comment*; and after breakfaſt fell into meditation concerning my projected *epick*; and being in ſome doubt as to the particular lives of ſome heroes, whom I propoſed to celebrate, I conſulted *Bayle* and *Moreri*, and was engaged two hours in examining various lives and characters, but then reſolved to go to my employment. When I was ſeated at my deſk, and

began to feel the glowing ſucceſſion of poetical ideas, my ſervant brought me a letter from a lawyer, requiring my inſtant attendance at *Gray's Inn* for half an hour. I went full of vexation, and was involved in buſineſs till eight at night; and then, being too much fatigued to ſtudy, ſupped, and went to bed.

Here my friend's journal concludes, which perhaps is pretty much a picture of the manner in which many proſecute their ſtudies. I therefore reſolved to ſend it you, imagining, that if you think it worthy of appearing in your paper, ſome of your readers may receive entertainment by recogniſing a reſemblance between my friend's conduct and their own. It muſt be left to the *Idler* accurately to aſcertain the proper methods of advancing in literature; but this one poſition, deducible from what has been ſaid above, may, I think, be reaſonably aſſerted, that he who finds himſelf ſtrongly attracted to any particular ſtudy, though it may happen to be out of his propoſed ſcheme, if it is not trifling or vicious, had better continue his application to it, ſince it is likely that he will, with much more eaſe and expedition, attain that which a warm inclination ſtimulates him to purſue, than that at which a preſcribed law compels him to toil.

I am, &c.

NUMB. 68. SATURDAY, *Auguſt* 4, 1759.

AMONG the ſtudies which have exerciſed the ingenious and the learned for more than three centuries, none has been more diligently or more ſucceſsfully cultivated than the art of tranſlation; by which the impediments which bar the way to ſcience are, in ſome meaſure, removed, and the multiplicity of languages becomes leſs incommodious.

Of every other kind of writing the ancients have left us models which all ſucceeding ages have laboured to imitate; but tranſlation may juſtly be claimed by the moderns as their own. In the firſt ages of the world inſtruction was commonly oral, and learning traditional, and what was not written could not be tranſlated. When alphabetical writing made the conveyance of opinions and the tranſmiſſion of events more eaſy and certain, literature did not flouriſh in more than one country at once, or diſtant nations had little commerce with each other; and thoſe few whom curioſity ſent abroad in queſt of improvement, delivered their acquiſitions in their own manner, deſirous perhaps to be conſidered as the inventors of that which they had learned from others.

The *Greeks* for a time travelled into *Egypt*, but they tranſlated no books from the *Egyptian* language; and

and when the *Macedonians* had overthrown the empire of *Perſia*, the countries that became ſubject to *Grecian* dominion ſtudied only the *Grecian* literature. The books of the conquered nations, if they had any among them, ſunk into oblivion; *Greece* conſidered herſelf as the miſtreſs if not as the parent of arts, her language contained all that was ſuppoſed to be known, and, except the ſacred writings of the Old Teſtament, I know not that the library of *Alexandria* adopted any thing from a foreign tongue.

The *Romans* confeſſed themſelves the ſcholars of the *Greeks*, and do not appear to have expected, what has ſince happened, that the ignorance of ſucceeding ages would prefer them to their teachers. Every man who in *Rome* aſpired to the praiſe of literature, thought it neceſſary to learn *Greek*, and had no need of verſions when they could ſtudy the originals. Tranſlation, however, was not wholly neglected. Dramatick poems could be underſtood by the people in no language but their own, and the *Romans* were ſometimes entertained with the tragedies of *Euripides* and the comedies of *Menander*. Other works were ſometimes attempted; in an old ſcholiaſt there is mention of a *Latin Iliad*, and we have not wholly loſt *Tully*'s verſion of the poem of *Aratus*; but it does not appear that any man grew eminent by interpreting another, and perhaps it was more frequent to tranſlate for exerciſe or amuſement, than for fame.

The *Arabs* were the firſt nation who felt the ardour of tranſlation; when they had ſubdued the eaſtern provinces of the *Greek* empire, they found their captives wiſer than themſelves, and made haſte

to relieve their wants by imparted knowledge. They diſcovered that many might grow wiſe by the labour of a few, and that improvements might be made with ſpeed, when they had the knowledge of former ages in their own language. They therefore made haſte to lay hold on medicine and philoſophy, and turned their chief authors into *Arabick*. Whether they attempted the poets is not known; their literary zeal was vehement, but it was ſhort, and probably expired before they had time to add the arts of elegance to thoſe of neceſſity.

The ſtudy of ancient literature was interrupted in *Europe* by the irruption of the northern nations, who ſubverted the *Roman* empire, and erected new kingdoms with new languages. It is not ſtrange, that ſuch confuſion ſhould ſuſpend literary attention; thoſe who loſt, and thoſe who gained dominion, had immediate difficulties to encounter, and immediate miſeries to redreſs, and had little leiſure, amidſt the violence of war, the trepidation of flight, the diſtreſſes of forced migration, or the tumults of unſettled conqueſt, to enquire after ſpeculative truth, to enjoy the amuſement of imaginary adventures, to know the hiſtory of former ages, or ſtudy the events of any other lives. But no ſooner had this chaos of dominion ſunk into order, than learning began again to flouriſh in the calm of peace. When life and poſſeſſions were ſecure, convenience and enjoyment were ſoon ſought, learning was found the higheſt gratification of the mind, and tranſlation became one of the means by which it was imparted.

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At laſt, by a concurrence of many cauſes, the *European* world was rouzed from its lethargy; thoſe arts which had been long obſcurely ſtudied in the gloom of monaſteries became the general favourites of mankind; every nation vied with its neighbour for the prize of learning; the epidemical emulation ſpread from ſouth to north, and curioſity and tranſlation found their way to *Britain*.

NUMB. 69. SATURDAY, *Auguſt* 11, 1759.

HE that reviews the progreſs of *Engliſh* literature, will find that tranſlation was very early cultivated among us, but that ſome principles, either wholly erroneous or too far extended, hindered our ſucceſs from being always equal to our diligence.

Chaucer, who is generally conſidered as the father of our poetry, has left a verſion of *Boetius on the Comforts of Philoſophy*, the book which ſeems to have been the favourite of the middle ages, which had been tranſlated into *Saxon* by king *Alfred*, and illuſtrated with a copious *comment* aſcribed to *Aquinas*. It may be ſuppoſed that *Chaucer* would apply more than common attention to an author of ſo much celebrity, yet has attempted nothing higher than a verſion ſtrictly literal, and has degraded the poetical parts to proſe, that the conſtraint of verſification might not obſtruct his zeal for fidelity.

Caxton taught us typography about the year 1474. The firſt book printed in *Engliſh* was a tranſlation. *Caxton* was both the tranſlator and printer of the *Deſtruccion of Troye*, a book which, in that infancy of learning, was conſidered as the beſt account of the fabulous ages, and which, though now driven out of notice by authors of no greater uſe or value, ſtill continued to be read in *Caxton's Engliſh* to the beginning of the preſent century.

Caxton proceeded as he began, and, except the poems of *Gower* and *Chaucer*, printed nothing but tranſlations from the *French*, in which the original is ſo ſcrupulouſly followed, that they afford us little knowledge of our own language; though the words are *Engliſh*, the phraſe is foreign.

As learning advanced, new works were adopted into our language, but I think with little improvement of the art of tranſlation, though foreign nations and other languages offered us models of a better method; till in the age of *Elizabeth* we began to find that greater liberty was neceſſary to elegance, and that elegance was neceſſary to general reception; ſome eſſays were then made upon the *Italian* poets which deſerve the praiſe and gratitude of poſterity.

But the old practice was not ſuddenly forſaken; *Holland* filled the nation with literal tranſlation, and, what is yet more ſtrange, the ſame exactneſs was obſtinately practiſed in the verſions of the poets. This abſurd labour of conſtruing into rhyme was countenanced by *Jonſon* in his verſion of *Horace*; and whether it be that more men have learning than genius, or that the endeavours of that time were more

directed

directed towards knowledge than delight, the accuracy of *Jonſon* found more imitators than the elegance of *Fairfax*; and *May*, *Sandys*, and *Holiday*, confined themſelves to the toil of rendering line for line, not indeed with equal felicity, for *May* and *Sandys* were poets, and *Holiday* only a ſcholar and a critick.

Feltham appears to conſider it as the eſtabliſhed law of poetical tranſlation, that the lines ſhould be neither more nor fewer than thoſe of the original; and ſo long had this prejudice prevailed, that *Denham* praiſes *Fanſhaw*'s verſion of *Guarini* as the example of a *new and noble way*, as the firſt attempt to break the boundaries of cuſtom and aſſert the natural freedom of the muſe.

In the general emulation of wit and genius which the feſtivity of the reſtoration produced, the poets ſhook off their conſtraint, and conſidered tranſlation as no longer confined to ſervile cloſeneſs. But reformation is ſeldom the work of pure virtue or unaſſiſted reaſon. Tranſlation was improved more by accident than conviction. The writers of the foregoing age had at leaſt learning equal to their genius; and being often more able to explain the ſentiments or illuſtrate the alluſions of the ancients, than to exhibit their graces and transfuſe their ſpirit, were perhaps willing ſometimes to conceal their want of poetry by profuſion of literature, and therefore tranſlated literally, that their fidelity might ſhelter their inſipidity or harſhneſs. The wits of *Charles*'s time had ſeldom more than ſlight and ſuperficial views, and their care was to hide their want of learning behind

the colours of a gay imagination; they therefore tranſlated always with freedom, ſometimes with licentiouſneſs, and perhaps expected that their readers ſhould accept ſpritelineſs for knowledge, and conſider ignorance and miſtake as the impatience and negligence of a mind too rapid to ſtop at difficulties, and too elevated to deſcend to minuteneſs.

Thus was tranſlation made more eaſy to the writer, and more delightful to the reader; and there is no wonder if eaſe and pleaſure have found their advocates. The paraphraſtic liberties have been almoſt univerſally admitted; and *Sherbourn*, whoſe learning was eminent, and who had no need of any excuſe to paſs ſlightly over obſcurities, is the only writer who in later times has attempted to juſtify or revive the ancient ſeverity.

There is undoubtedly a mean to be obſerved. *Dryden* ſaw very early that cloſeneſs beſt preſerved an author's ſenſe, and that freedom beſt exhibited his ſpirit; he therefore will deſerve the higheſt praiſe, who can give a repreſentation at once faithful and pleaſing, who can convey the ſame thoughts with the ſame graces, and who when he tranſlates changes nothing but the language.

NUMB. 70. SATURDAY, *Auguſt* 18, 1759.

FEW faults of ſtyle, whether real or imaginary, excite the malignity of a more numerous claſs of readers, than the uſe of hard words.

If an author be ſuppoſed to involve his thoughts in voluntary obſcurity, and to obſtruct, by unneceſſary difficulties, a mind eager in purſuit of truth; if he writes not to make others learned, but to boaſt the learning which he poſſeſſes himſelf, and wiſhes to be admired rather than underſtood, he counteracts the firſt end of writing, and juſtly ſuffers the utmoſt ſeverity of cenſure, or the more afflictive ſeverity of neglect.

But words are only hard to thoſe who do not underſtand them, and the critick ought always to enquire, whether he is incommoded by the fault of the writer, or by his own.

Every author does not write for every reader; many queſtions are ſuch as the illiterate part of mankind can have neither intereſt nor pleaſure in diſcuſſing, and which therefore it would be an uſeleſs endeavour to level with common minds, by tireſome circumlocutions or laborious explanations; and many ſubjects of general uſe may be treated in a different manner, as the book is intended for the learned or the ignorant. Diffuſion and explication are neceſſary to the inſtruction of thoſe who, being neither able nor accuſtomed to think for themſelves,

can learn only what is expreſsly taught; but they who can form parallels, diſcover conſequences, and multiply concluſions, are beſt pleaſed with involution of argument and compreſſion of thought; they deſire only to receive the ſeeds of knowledge which they may branch out by their own power, to have the way to truth pointed out which they can then follow without a guide.

The Guardian directs one of his pupils *to think with the wiſe, but ſpeak with the vulgar.* This is a precept ſpecious enough, but not always practicable. Difference of thoughts will produce difference of language. He that thinks with more extent than another will want words of larger meaning; he that thinks with more ſubtilty will ſeek for terms of more nice diſcrimination; and where is the wonder, ſince words are but the images of things, that he who never knew the originals ſhould not know the copies?

Yet vanity inclines us to find faults any where rather than in ourſelves. He that reads and grows no wiſer, ſeldom ſuſpects his own deficiency; but complains of hard words and obſcure ſentences, and aſks why books are written which cannot be underſtood.

Among the hard words which are no longer to be uſed, it has been long the cuſtom to number terms of art. *Every man* (ſays *Swift*) *is more able to explain the ſubject of an art than its profeſſors; a farmer will tell you, in two words, that he has broken his leg; but a ſurgeon, after a long diſcourſe, ſhall leave you as ignorant as you were before.* This could only have been ſaid by ſuch an exact obſerver of life, in

gratifica-

gratification of malignity, or in oſtentation of acuteneſs. Every hour produces inſtances of the neceſſity of terms of art. Mankind could never conſpire in uniform affectation; it is not but by neceſſity that every ſcience and every trade has its peculiar language. They that content themſelves with general ideas may reſt in general terms; but thoſe whoſe ſtudies or employments force them upon cloſer inſpection, muſt have names for particular parts, and words by which they may expreſs various modes of combination, ſuch as none but themſelves have occaſion to conſider.

Artiſts are indeed ſometimes ready to ſuppoſe that none can be ſtrangers to words to which themſelves are familiar, talk to an incidental enquirer as they talk to one another, and make their knowledge ridiculous by injudicious obtruſion. An art cannot be taught but by its proper terms, but it is not always neceſſary to teach the art.

That the vulgar expreſs their thoughts clearly is far from true; and what perſpicuity can be found among them proceeds not from the eaſineſs of their language, but the ſhallowneſs of their thoughts. He that ſees a building as a common ſpectator, contents himſelf with relating that it is great or little, mean or ſplendid, lofty or low; all theſe words are intelligible and common, but they convey no diſtinct or limited ideas; if he attempts, without the terms of architecture, to delineate the parts, or enumerate the ornaments, his narration at once becomes unintelligible. The terms, indeed, generally diſpleaſe, becauſe they are underſtood by few; but they are little underſtood only becauſe

few,

few, that look upon an edifice, examine its parts, or analyſe its columns into their members.

The ſtate of every other art is the ſame; as it is curſorily ſurveyed or accurately examined, different forms of expreſſion become proper. In morality it is one thing to diſcuſs the niceties of the caſuiſt, and another to direct the practice of common life. In agriculture, he that inſtructs the farmer to plough and ſow, may convey his notions without the words which he would find neceſſary in explaining to philoſophers the proceſs of vegetation; and if he, who has nothing to do but to be honeſt by the ſhorteſt way, will perplex his mind with ſubtile ſpeculations; or if he whoſe taſk is to reap and threſh will not be contented without examining the evolution of the ſeed and circulation of the ſap, the writers whom either ſhall conſult are very little to be blamed, though it ſhould ſometimes happen that they are read in vain.

NUMB. 71. SATURDAY, *Auguſt* 25, 1759.

DICK SHIFTER was born in *Cheapſide*, and having paſſed reputably through all the claſſes of *St. Paul*'s ſchool, has been for ſome years a ſtudent in the *Temple*. He is of opinion that intenſe application dulls the faculties, and thinks it neceſſary to temper the ſeverity of the law by books that engage the mind, but do not fatigue it. He has therefore made a copious collection of plays, poems, and romances, to which he has recourſe when he fancies himſelf tired with ſtatutes and reports, and he ſeldom enquires very nicely whether he is weary or idle.

Dick has received from his favourite authors very ſtrong impreſſions of a country life; and though his furtheſt excurſions have been to *Greenwich* on one ſide, and *Chelſea* on the other, he has talked for ſeveral years, with great pomp of language and elevation of ſentiments, about a ſtate too high for contempt and too low for envy, about homely quiet and blameleſs ſimplicity, paſtoral delights and rural innocence.

His friends who had eſtates in the country, often invited him to paſs the ſummer among them, but ſomething or other had always hindered him; and he conſidered, that to reſide in the houſe of another man, was to incur a kind of dependance inconſiſtent with that laxity of life which he had imaged as the chief good.

This

This ſummer he reſolved to be happy, and procured a lodging to be taken for him at a ſolitary houſe, ſituated about thirty miles from *London*, on the banks of a ſmall river, with corn fields before it, and a hill on each ſide covered with wood. He concealed the place of his retirement that none might violate his obſcurity, and promiſed himſelf many a happy day when he ſhould hide himſelf among the trees, and contemplate the tumults and vexations of the town.

He ſtepped into the poſt-chaiſe with his heart beating and his eyes ſparkling, was conveyed through many varieties of delightful proſpects, ſaw hills and meadows, corn fields and paſture, ſucceed each other, and for four hours charged none of his poets with fiction or exaggeration. He was now within ſix miles of happineſs, when having never felt ſo much agitation before, he began to wiſh his journey at an end, and the laſt hour was paſſed in changing his poſture, and quarrelling with his driver.

An hour may be tedious, but cannot be long; he at length alighted at his new dwelling, and was received as he expected; he looked round upon the hills and rivulets, but his joints were ſtiff and his muſcles ſore, and his firſt requeſt was to ſee his bedchamber.

He reſted well, and aſcribed the ſoundneſs of his ſleep to the ſtillneſs of the country. He expected from that time nothing but nights of quiet and days of rapture, and as ſoon as he had riſen, wrote an account of his new ſtate to one of his friends in the Temple.

Dear

Dear FRANK,

I never pitied thee before. I am now as I could wiſh every man of wiſdom and virtue to be, in the regions of calm content and placid meditation; with all the beauties of nature ſoliciting my notice, and all the diverſities of pleaſure courting my acceptance; the birds are chirping in the hedges, and the flowers blooming in the mead; the breeze is whiſtling in the woods, and the ſun dancing on the water. I can now ſay with truth, that a man capable of enjoying the purity of happineſs, is never more buſy than in his hours of leiſure, nor ever leſs ſolitary than in a place of ſolitude.

I am, dear FRANK, &c.

When he had ſent away his letter, he walked into the wood with ſome inconvenience from the furze that pricked his legs, and the briars that ſcratched his face; he at laſt ſat down under a tree, and heard with great delight a ſhower, by which he was not wet, rattling among the branches: this, ſaid he, is the true image of obſcurity; we hear of troubles and commotions, but never feel them.

His amuſement did not overpower the calls of nature, and he therefore went back to order his dinner. He knew that the country produces whatever is eaten or drunk, and imagining that he was now at the ſource of luxury, reſolved to indulge himſelf with dainties which he ſuppoſed might be procured at a price next to nothing, if any price at all was expected; and intended to amaze the ruſticks with his generoſity, by paying more than they would aſk. Of twenty diſhes which he named, he

was

was amazed to find that ſcarce one was to be had, and heard with aſtoniſhment and indignation, that all the fruits of the earth were ſold at a higher price than in the ſtreets of *London*.

His meal was ſhort and ſullen, and he retired again to his tree, to enquire how dearneſs could be conſiſtent with abundance, or how fraud ſhould be practiſed by ſimplicity. He was not ſatisfied with his own ſpeculations, and returning home early in the evening, went a while from window to window, and found that he wanted ſomething to do.

He enquired for a news-paper, and was told that farmers never minded news, but that they could ſend for it from the ale-houſe. A meſſenger was diſpatched, who ran away at full ſpeed, but loitered an hour behind the hedges, and at laſt coming back with his feet purpoſely bemired, inſtead of expreſſing the gratitude which Mr. *Shifter* expected for the bounty of a ſhilling, ſaid that the night was wet, and the way dirty, and he hoped that his worſhip would not think it much to give him half a crown.

Dick now went to bed with ſome abatement of his expectations; but ſleep, I know not how, revives our hopes and rekindles our deſires. He roſe early in the morning, ſurveyed the landſcape, and was pleaſed. He walked out, and paſſed from field to field, without obſerving any beaten path, and wondered that he had not ſeen the ſhepherdeſſes dancing, nor heard the ſwains piping to their flocks.

At laſt he ſaw ſome reapers and harveſt-women at dinner. Here, ſaid he, are the true *Arcadians*,

and advanced courteouſly towards them, as afraid of confuſing them by the dignity of his preſence. They acknowledged his ſuperiority by no other token than that of aſking him for ſomething to drink. He imagined that he had now purchaſed the privilege of diſcourſe, and began to deſcend to familiar queſtions, endeavouring to accommodate his diſcourſe to the groſſneſs of ruſtick underſtandings. The clowns ſoon found that he did not know wheat from rye, and began to deſpiſe him; one of the boys, by pretending to ſhew him a bird's neſt, decoyed him into a ditch, and one of the wenches ſold him a bargain.

This walk had given him no great pleaſure, but he hoped to find other ruſticks leſs coarſe of manners, and leſs miſchievous of diſpoſition. Next morning he was accoſted by an attorney, who told him, that unleſs he made farmer *Dobſon* ſatisfaction for trampling his graſs, he had orders to indict him. *Shifter* was offended, but not terrified; and telling the attorney that he was himſelf a lawyer, talked ſo volubly of pettifoggers and barraters, that he drove him away.

Finding his walks thus interrupted, he was inclined to ride, and being pleaſed with the appearance of a horſe that was grazing in a neighbouring meadow, enquired the owner, who warranted him ſound, and would not ſell him, but that he was too fine for a plain man. *Dick* paid down the price, and riding out to enjoy the evening, fell with his new horſe into a ditch; they got out with difficulty, and as he was going to mount again, a countryman looked at the horſe, and perceived

him

him to be blind. *Dick* went to the ſeller, and demanded back his money; but was told, that a man who rented his ground muſt do the beſt for himſelf, that his landlord had his rent though the year was barren, and that whether horſes had eyes or no, he ſhould ſell them to the higheſt bidder.

Shifter now began to be tired with ruſtick ſimplicity, and on the fifth day took poſſeſſion again of his chambers, and bad farewel to the regions of calm content and placid meditation.

NUMB. 72. SATURDAY, *September* 1, 1759.

MEN complain of nothing more frequently than of deficient memory; and, indeed, every one finds that many of the ideas which he deſired to retain have ſlipped irretrievably away; that the acquiſitions of the mind are ſometimes equally fugitive with the gifts of fortune; and that a ſhort intermiſſion of attention more certainly leſſens knowledge than impairs an eſtate.

To aſſiſt this weakneſs of our nature many methods have been propoſed, all of which may be juſtly ſuſpected of being ineffectual; for no art of memory, however its effects have been boaſted or admired, has been ever adopted into general uſe, nor have thoſe who poſſeſſed it appeared to excel others in readineſs of recollection or multiplicity of attainments.

There

There is another art of which all have felt the want, though *Themiſtocles* only confeſſed it. We ſuffer equal pain from the pertinacious adheſion of unwelcome images, as from the evaneſcence of thoſe which are pleaſing and uſeful; and it may be doubted whether we ſhould be more benefited by the art of memory or the art of forgetfulneſs.

Forgetfulneſs is neceſſary to remembrance. Ideas are retained by renovation of that impreſſion which time is always wearing away, and which new images are ſtriving to obliterate. If uſeleſs thoughts could be expelled from the mind, all the valuable parts of our knowledge would more frequently recur, and every recurrence would reinſtate them in their former place.

It is impoſſible to conſider, without ſome regret, how much might have been learned, or how much might have been invented, by a rational and vigorous application of time, uſeleſsly or painfully paſſed in the revocation of events, which have left neither good nor evil behind them; in grief for misfortunes either repaired or irreparable, in reſentment of injuries known only to ourſelves, of which death has put the authors beyond our power.

Philoſophy has accumulated precept upon precept, to warn us againſt the anticipation of future calamities. All uſeleſs miſery is certainly folly; and he that feels evils before they come may be deſervedly cenſured; yet ſurely to dread the future is more reaſonable than to lament the paſt. The buſineſs of life is to go forwards: he who ſees evil in proſpect meets it in his way, but he who catches it

by retroſpection turns back to find it. That which is feared may ſometimes be avoided, but that which is regretted to-day may be regretted again to-morrow.

Regret is indeed uſeful and virtuous, and not only allowable but neceſſary, when it tends to the amendment of life, or to admonition of error which we may be again in danger of committing. But a very ſmall part of the moments ſpent in meditation on the paſt, produce any reaſonable caution or ſalutary ſorrow. Moſt of the mortifications that we have ſuffered, aroſe from the concurrence of local and temporary circumſtances, which can never meet again; and moſt of our diſappointments have ſucceeded thoſe expectations, which life allows not to be formed a ſecond time.

It would add much to human happineſs, if an art could be taught of forgetting all of which the remembrance is at once uſeleſs and afflictive, if that pain which never can end in pleaſure could be driven totally away, that the mind might perform its functions without incumbrance, and the paſt might no longer encroach upon the preſent.

Little can be done well to which the whole mind is not applied; the buſineſs of every day calls for the day to which it is aſſigned; and he will have no leiſure to regret yeſterday's vexations who reſolves not to have a new ſubject of regret to-morrow.

But to forget or to remember at pleaſure, are equally beyond the power of man. Yet as memory may be aſſiſted by method, and the decays of knowledge repaired by ſtated times of recollection, ſo the

the power of forgetting is capable of improvement. Reaſon will, by a reſolute conteſt, prevail over imagination, and the power may be obtained of tranſferring the attention as judgment ſhall direct.

The incurſions of troubleſome thoughts are often violent and importunate; and it is not eaſy to a mind accuſtomed to their inroads to expel them immediately by putting better images into motion; but this enemy of quiet is above all others weakened by every defeat; the reflection which has been once overpowered and ejected, ſeldom returns with any formidable vehemence.

Employment is the great inſtrument of intellectual dominion. The mind cannot retire from its enemy into total vacancy, or turn aſide from one object but by paſſing to another. The gloomy and the reſentful are always found among thoſe who have nothing to do, or who do nothing. We muſt be buſy about good or evil, and he to whom the preſent offers nothing will often be looking backward on the paſt.

NUMB. 73. SATURDAY, *September* 8, 1759.

THAT every man would be rich if a wiſh could obtain riches, is a poſition, which I believe few will conteſt, at leaſt in a nation like ours, in which commerce has kindled an univerſal emulation of wealth, and in which money receives all the honours which are the proper right of knowledge and of virtue.

Yet though we are all labouring for gold as for the chief good, and, by the natural effort of unwearied diligence, have found many expeditious methods of obtaining it, we have not been able to improve the art of uſing it, or to make it produce more happineſs than it afforded in former times, when every declaimer expatiated on its miſchiefs, and every philoſopher taught his followers to deſpiſe it.

Many of the dangers imputed of old to exorbitant wealth, are now at an end. The rich are neither waylaid by robbers, nor watched by informers; there is nothing to be dreaded from proſcriptions, or ſeizures. The neceſſity of concealing treaſure has long ceaſed; no man now needs counterfeit mediocrity, and condemn his plate and jewels to caverns and darkneſs, or feaſt his mind with the conſciouſneſs of clouded ſplendour, of finery which is uſeleſs till it is ſhewn, and which he dares not ſhew.

In

In our time the poor are ſtrongly tempted to aſſume the appearance of wealth, but the wealthy very rarely deſire to be thought poor; for we are all at full liberty to diſplay riches by every mode of oſtentation. We fill our houſes with uſeleſs ornaments, only to ſhew that we can buy them; we cover our coaches with gold, and employ artiſts in the diſcovery of new faſhions of expence; and yet it cannot be found that riches produce happineſs.

Of riches, as of every thing elſe, the hope is more than the enjoyment; while we conſider them as the means to be uſed, at ſome future time, for the attainment of felicity, we preſs on our purſuit ardently and vigorouſly, and that ardour ſecures us from wearineſs of ourſelves; but no ſooner do we ſit down to enjoy our acquiſitions, than we find them inſufficient to fill up the vacuities of life.

One cauſe which is not always obſerved of the inſufficiency of riches, is, that they very ſeldom make their owner rich. To be rich, is to have more than is deſired, and more than is wanted; to have ſomething which may be ſpent without reluctance, and ſcattered without care, with which the ſudden demands of deſire may be gratified, the caſual freaks of fancy indulged, or the unexpected opportunities of benevolence improved.

Avarice is always poor, but poor by her own fault. There is another poverty to which the rich are expoſed with leſs guilt by the officiouſneſs of others. Every man, eminent for exuberance of fortune, is

ſurrounded from morning to evening, and from evening to midnight, by flatterers, whoſe art of adulation conſiſts in exciting artificial wants, and in forming new ſchemes of profuſion.

Tom Tranquil, when he came to age, found himſelf in poſſeſſion of a fortune, of which the twentieth part might perhaps have made him rich. His temper is eaſy, and his affections ſoft; he receives every man with kindneſs, and hears him with credulity. His friends took care to ſettle him by giving him a wife, whom, having no particular inclination, he rather accepted than choſe, becauſe he was told that ſhe was proper for him.

He was now to live with dignity proportionate to his fortune. What his fortune requires or admits *Tom* does not know, for he has little ſkill in computation, and none of his friends think it their intereſt to improve it. If he was ſuffered to live by his own choice, he would leave every thing as he finds it, and paſs through the world diſtinguiſhed only by inoffenſive gentleneſs. But the miniſters of luxury have marked him out as one at whoſe expence they may exerciſe their arts. A companion, who had juſt learned the names of the *Italian* maſters, runs from ſale to ſale, and buys pictures, for which Mr. *Tranquil* pays, without enquiring where they ſhall be hung. Another fills his garden with ſtatues, which *Tranquil* wiſhes away, but dares not remove. One of his friends is learning architecture by building him a houſe, which he paſſed by, I enquired to whom it belonged; another has for three years digging canals and raiſing mounts,

mounts, cutting trees down in one place, and planting them in another, on which *Tranquil* looks with ſerene indifference, without aſking what will be the coſt. Another projector tells him that a water-work, like that of *Verſailles*, will complete the beauties of his ſeat, and lays his draughts before him; *Tranquil* turns his eyes upon them, and the artiſt begins his explanations; *Tranquil* raiſes no objections, but orders him to begin the work, that he may eſcape from talk which he does not underſtand.

Thus a thouſand hands are buſy at his expence, without adding to his pleaſures. He pays and receives viſits, and has loitered in publick or in ſolitude, talking in ſummer of the town, and in winter of the country, without knowing that his fortune is impaired, till his ſteward told him this morning, that he could pay the workmen no longer but by mortgaging a manor.

NUMB. 74. SATURDAY, *September* 15, 1759.

IN the mythological pedigree of learning, memory is made the mother of the muſes, by which the maſters of ancient wiſdom, perhaps, meant to ſhew the neceſſity of ſtoring the mind copiouſly with true notions, before the imagination ſhould be ſuffered to form fictions or collect embelliſhments; for the works of an ignorant poet can afford nothing higher than pleaſing ſound, and fiction is of no other uſe than to diſplay the treaſures of memory.

The neceſſity of memory to the acquiſition of knowledge is inevitably felt and univerſally allowed, ſo that ſcarcely any other of the mental faculties are commonly conſidered as neceſſary to a ſtudent: he that admires the proficiency of another, always attributes it to the happineſs of his memory; and he that laments his own defects, concludes with a wiſh that his memory was better.

It is evident, that when the power of retention is weak, all the attempts at eminence of knowledge muſt be vain; and as few are willing to be doomed to perpetual ignorance, I may, perhaps, afford conſolation to ſome that have fallen too eaſily into deſpondence, by obſerving that ſuch weakneſs is, in my opinion, very rare, and that few have reaſon to complain of nature as unkindly ſparing of the gifts of memory.

In

In the common buſineſs of life, we find the memory of one like that of another, and honeſtly impute omiſſions not to involuntary forgetfulneſs, but culpable inattention; but in literary inquiries, failure is imputed rather to want of memory than of diligence.

We conſider ourſelves as defective in memory, either becauſe we remember leſs than we deſire, or leſs than we ſuppoſe others to remember.

Memory is like all other human powers, with which no man can be ſatisfied who meaſures them by what he can conceive, or by what he can deſire. He whoſe mind is moſt capacious, finds it much too narrow for his wiſhes: he that remembers moſt, remembers little compared with what he forgets. He therefore that, after the peruſal of a book, finds few ideas remaining in his mind, is not to conſider the diſappointment as peculiar to himſelf, or to reſign all hopes of improvement, becauſe he does not retain what even the author has perhaps forgotten.

He who compares his memory with that of others, is often too haſty to lament the inequality. Nature has ſometimes, indeed, afforded examples of enormous, wonderful, and gigantick memory. *Scaliger* reports of himſelf, that, in his youth, he could repeat above an hundred verſes, having once read them; and *Barthius* declares, that he wrote his *Comment upon Claudian* without conſulting the text. But not to have ſuch degrees of memory, is no more to be lamented, than not to have the ſtrength of *Hercules*, or the ſwiftneſs of *Achilles*.

Achilles. He that in the diſtribution of good, has an equal ſhare with common men, may juſtly be contented. Where there is no ſtriking diſparity, it is difficult to know of two which remembers moſt, and ſtill more difficult to diſcover which read with greater attention, which has renewed the firſt impreſſion by more frequent repetitions, or by what accidental combination of ideas either mind might have united any particular narrative or argument to its former ſtock.

But memory, however impartially diſtributed, ſo often deceives our truſt, that almoſt every man attempts, by ſome artifice or other, to ſecure its fidelity.

It is the practice of many readers, to note in the margin of their books, the moſt important paſſages, the ſtrongeſt arguments, or the brighteſt ſentiments. Thus they load their minds with ſuperfluous attention, repreſs the vehemence of curioſity by uſeleſs deliberation, and by frequent interruption break the current of narration or the chain of reaſon, and at laſt cloſe the volume, and forget the paſſages and marks together.

Others I have found unalterably perſuaded, that nothing is certainly remembered but what is tranſcribed; and they have therefore paſſed weeks and months in transferring large quotations to a common-place book. Yet, why any part of a book, which can be conſulted at pleaſure, ſhould be copied, I was never able to diſcover. The hand has no cloſer correſpondence with the memory than the eye. The act of writing itſelf diſtracts the thoughts,

thoughts, and what is read twice is commonly better remembered than what is tranſcribed. This method therefore conſumes time without aſſiſting memory.

The true art of memory is the art of attention. No man will read with much advantage, who is not able, at pleaſure, to evacuate his mind, or who brings not to his author an intellect defecated and pure, neither turbid with care, nor agitated by pleaſure. If the repoſitories of thought are already full, what can they receive? If the mind is employed on the paſt or future, the book will be held before the eyes in vain. What is read with delight is commonly retained, becauſe pleaſure always ſecures attention; but the books which are conſulted by occaſional neceſſity, and peruſed with impatience, ſeldom leave any traces on the mind.

Having thus ſettled his determination, he declared to his friends his deſign of viſiting *Tauris*, and ſaw with more pleaſure than he ventured to expreſs, the regret with which he was diſmiſſed. He could not bear to delay the honours to which he was deſtined, and therefore haſted away, and in a ſhort time entered the capital of *Perſia*. He was immediately immerſed in the crowd, and paſſed unobſerved to his father's houſe. He entered, and was received, though not unkindly, yet without any exceſs of fondneſs or exclamations of rapture. His father had, in his abſence, ſuffered many loſſes, and *Gelâleddin* was conſidered as an additional burthen to a falling family.

When he recovered from his ſurprize, he began to diſplay his acquiſitions, and practiſed all the arts of narration and diſquiſition; but the poor have no leiſure to be pleaſed with eloquence; they heard his arguments without reflection, and his pleaſantries without a ſmile. He then applied himſelf ſingly to his brothers and ſiſters, but found them all chained down by invariable attention to their own fortunes, and inſenſible of any other excellence than that which could bring ſome remedy for indigence.

It was now known in the neighbourhood that *Gelaleddin* was returned, and he ſate for ſome days in expectation that the learned would viſit him for conſultation, or the great for entertainment. But who will be pleaſed or inſtructed in the manſions of poverty? He then frequented places of publick reſort, and endeavoured to attract notice by the copiouſneſs of his talk. The ſpritely were ſilenced, and went away to cenſure in ſome other place his arrogance

and his pedantry; and the dull liſtened quietly for a while, and then wondered why any man ſhould take pains to obtain ſo much knowledge which would never do him good.

He next ſolicited the viſiers for employment, not doubting but his ſervice would be eagerly accepted. He was told by one that there was no vacancy in his office; by another, that his merit was above any patronage but that of the emperor; by a third, that he would not forget him; and by the chief viſier, that he did not think literature of any great uſe in publick buſineſs. He was ſometimes admitted to their tables, where he exerted his wit and diffuſed his knowledge; but he obſerved, that where, by endeavour or accident, he had remarkably excelled, he was ſeldom invited a ſecond time.

He now returned to *Baſſora*, wearied and diſguſted, but confident of reſuming his former rank, and revelling again in ſatiety of praiſe. But he who had been neglected at *Tauris*, was not much regarded at *Baſſora*; he was conſidered as a fugitive, who returned only becauſe he could live in no other place; his companions found that they had formerly overrated his abilities, and he lived long without notice or eſteem.

NUMB. 76. SATURDAY, *September* 29, 1759.

To the IDLER.

SIR,

I WAS much pleaſed with your ridicule of thoſe ſhallow criticks, whoſe judgment, though often right as far as it goes, yet reaches only to inferior beauties, and who, unable to comprehend the whole, judge only by parts, and from thence determine the merit of extenſive works. But there is another kind of critick ſtill worſe, who judges by narrow rules, and thoſe too often falſe, and which, though they ſhould be true, and founded on nature, will lead him but a very little way towards the juſt eſtimation of the ſublime beauties in works of genius; for whatever part of an art can be executed or criticiſed by rules, that part is no longer the work of genius, which implies excellence out of the reach of rules. For my own part, I profeſs myſelf an *Idler*, and love to give my judgment, ſuch as it is, from my immediate perceptions, without much fatigue of thinking; and I am of opinion, that if a man has not thoſe perceptions right, it will be vain for him to endeavour to ſupply their place by rules, which may enable him to talk more learnedly, but not to diſtinguiſh more acutely. Another reaſon which has leſſened my affection for the ſtudy of criticiſm is, that criticks, ſo far as I have obſerved, debar themſelves

ſelves from receiving any pleaſure from the polite arts, at the ſame time that they profeſs to love and admire them: for theſe rules, being always uppermoſt, give them ſuch a propenſity to criticiſe, that, inſtead of giving up the reins of their imagination into their author's hands, their frigid minds are employed in examining whether the performance be according to the rules of art.

To thoſe who are reſolved to be criticks in ſpite of nature, and at the ſame time have no great diſpoſition to much reading and ſtudy, I would recommend to them to aſſume the character of connoiſſeur, which may be purchaſed at a much cheaper rate than that of a critick in poetry. The remembrance of a few names of painters, with their general characters, with a few rules of the academy, which they may pick up among the painters, will go a great way towards making a very notable connoiſſeur.

With a gentleman of this caſt, I viſited laſt week the *Cartoons* at *Hampton-court*; he was juſt returned from *Italy*, a connoiſſeur of courſe, and of courſe his mouth full of nothing but the grace of *Raffaelle*, the purity of *Domenichino*, the learning of *Pouſſin*, the air of *Guido*, the greatneſs of taſte of the *Charaches*, and the ſublimity and grand contorno of *Michael Angelo*; with all the reſt of the cant of criticiſm, which he emitted with that volubility which generally thoſe orators have who annex no ideas to their words.

As we were paſſing through the rooms, in our way to the gallery, I made him obſerve a whole length of *Charles* the firſt by *Vandyke*, as a perfect

repreſentation of the character as well as the figure of the man. He agreed it was very fine, but it wanted ſpirit and contraſt, and had not the flowing line, without which a figure could not poſſibly be graceful. When we entered the gallery, I thought I could perceive him recollecting his rules by which he was to criticiſe *Raffaelle*. I ſhall paſs over his obſervation of the boats being too little, and other criticiſms of that kind, till we arrived at St. *Paul preaching*. "This," ſays he, "is eſteemed the moſt excellent of all the *cartoons*; what nobleneſs, what dignity there is in that figure of St. *Paul!* and yet what an addition to that nobleneſs could *Raffaelle* have given, had the art of contraſt been known in his time! but above all, the flowing line, which conſtitutes grace and beauty. You would not then have ſeen an upright figure ſtanding equally on both legs, and both hands ſtretched forward in the ſame direction, and his drapery, to all appearance, without the leaſt art of diſpoſition." The following picture is the *Charge to Peter*. "Here," ſays he, "are twelve upright figures; what a pity it is that *Raffaelle* was not acquainted with the pyramidal principle! He would then have contrived the figures in the middle to have been on higher ground, or the figures at the extremities ſtooping or lying, which would not only have formed the group into the ſhape of a pyramid, but likewiſe contraſted the ſtanding figures. Indeed," added he, "I have often lamented that ſo great a genius as *Raffaelle* did not live in this enlightened age, ſince the art

has

has been reduced to principles, and had had his education in one of the modern academies; what glorious works might we then have expected from his divine pencil!"

I ſhall trouble you no longer with my friend's obſervations, which, I ſuppoſe, you are now able to continue by yourſelf. It is curious to obſerve, that, at the ſame time that great admiration is pretended for a name of fixed reputation, objections are raiſed againſt thoſe very qualities by which that great name was acquired.

Thoſe criticks are continually lamenting that *Raffaelle* had not the colouring and harmony of *Rubens*, or the light and ſhadow of *Rembrant*, without conſidering how much the gay harmony of the former, and affectation of the latter, would take from the dignity of *Raffaelle*; and yet *Rubens* had great harmony, and *Rembrant* underſtood light and ſhadow; but what may be an excellence in a lower claſs of painting, becomes a blemiſh in a higher; as the quick, ſprirely turn, which is the life and beauty of epigrammatick compoſitions, would but ill ſuit with the majeſty of heroick poetry.

To conclude; I would not be thought to infer from any thing that has been ſaid, that rules are abſolutely unneceſſary, but to cenſure ſcrupuloſity, a ſervile attention to minute exactneſs, which is ſometimes inconſiſtent with higher excellency, and is loſt in the blaze of expanded genius.

I do not know whether you will think painting a general ſubject. By inſerting this letter, perhaps

you will incur the cenſure a man would deſerve, whoſe buſineſs being to entertain a whole room, ſhould turn his back to the company, and talk to a particular perſon.

I am, SIR, &c.

NUMB. 77. SATURDAY, *October* 6, 1759.

EASY poetry is univerſally admired, but I know not whether any rule has yet been fixed, by which it may be decided when poetry can be properly called eaſy. *Horace* has told us, that it is ſuch as *every reader hopes to equal, but after long labour finds unattainable.* This is a very looſe deſcription, in which only the effect is noted; the qualities which produce this effect remain to be inveſtigated.

Eaſy poetry is that in which natural thoughts are expreſſed without violence to the language. The diſcriminating character of eaſe conſiſts principally in the diction, for all true poetry requires that the ſentiments be natural. Language ſuffers violence by harſh or by daring figures, by tranſpoſition, by unuſual acceptations of words, and by any licence, which would be avoided by a writer of proſe. Where any artifice appears in the conſtruction of the verſe, that verſe is no longer eaſy. Any epithet

which can be ejected without diminution of the ſenſe, any curious iteration of the ſame word, and all unuſual, though not ungrammatical ſtructure of ſpeech, deſtroy the grace of eaſy poetry.

The firſt lines of *Pope*'s Iliad afford examples of many licences which an eaſy writer muſt decline;

> *Achilles wrath*, to Greece the *direful ſpring*
> Of woes unnumber'd, *heav'nly* Goddeſs ſing,
> The wrath which *hurl'd* to Pluto's *gloomy reign*
> The ſouls of *mighty* chiefs untimely ſlain.

In the firſt couplet the language is diſtorted by inverſions, clogged with ſuperfluities, and clouded by a harſh metaphor; and in the ſecond there are two words uſed in an uncommon ſenſe, and two epithets inſerted only to lengthen the line; all theſe practices may in a long work eaſily be pardoned, but they always produce ſome degree of obſcurity and ruggedneſs.

Eaſy poetry has been ſo long excluded by ambition of ornament, and luxuriance of imagery, that its nature ſeems now to be forgotten. Affectation, however oppoſite to eaſe, is ſometimes miſtaken for it; and thoſe who aſpire to gentle elegance, collect female phraſes and faſhionable barbariſms, and imagine that ſtyle to be eaſy which cuſtom has made familiar. Such was the idea of the poet who wrote the following verſes to a *counteſs cutting paper*:

> *Pallas* grew *vap'riſh once and odd*,
> She would not *do the leaſt right thing*
> Either for Goddeſs or for God,
> Nor work, nor play, nor paint, nor ſing.

Jove frown'd, and "Uſe (he cry'd) thoſe eyes
"So ſkilful, and thoſe hands ſo taper;
"Do ſomething exquiſite and wiſe"—
She bow'd, obey'd him, and cut paper.

This vexing him who gave her birth,
Thought by all heaven a *burning ſhame*,
What does ſhe next, but bids on earth
Her *Burlington* do juſt the ſame?

Pallas, you give yourſelf *ſtrange airs*;
But ſure you'll find it hard to ſpoil
The ſenſe and taſte of one that bears
The name of *Savile* and of *Boyle*.

Alas! one bad example ſhown,
How quickly all the ſex purſue!
See, madam! ſee the arts o'erthrown
Between *John Overton* and *you*.

It is the prerogative of eaſy poetry to be underſtood as long as the language laſts; but modes of ſpeech, which owe their prevalence only to modiſh folly, or to the eminence of thoſe that uſe them, die away with their inventors, and their meaning, in a few years, is no longer known.

Eaſy poetry is commonly ſought in petty compoſitions upon minute ſubjects; but eaſe, though it excludes pomp, will admit greatneſs. Many lines in Cato's ſoliloquy are at once eaſy and ſublime:

'Tis the divinity that ſtirs within us;
'Tis heaven itſelf that points out an hereafter,
And intimates eternity to man.
—— —— If there's a power above us,
And that there is all nature cries aloud
Thro' all her works, he muſt delight in virtue,
And that which he delights in muſt be happy.

Nor

Nor is eaſe more contrary to wit than to ſublimity; the celebrated ſtanza of *Cowley*, on a lady elaborately dreſſed, loſes nothing of its freedom by the ſpirit of the ſentiment.

> Th' adorning thee with ſo much art
> Is but a barb'rous ſkill,
> 'Tis like the pois'ning of a dart,
> Too apt before to kill.

Cowley ſeems to have poſſeſſed the power of writing eaſily beyond any other of our poets, yet his purſuit of remote thoughts led him often into harſhneſs of expreſſion. *Waller* often attempted, but ſeldom attained it; for he is too frequently driven into tranſpoſitions. The poets, from the time of *Dryden*, have gradually advanced in embelliſhment, and conſequently departed from ſimplicity and eaſe.

To require from any author many pieces of eaſy poetry, would be indeed to oppreſs him with too hard a taſk. It is leſs difficult to write a volume of lines ſwelled with epithets, brightened by figures, and ſtiffened by tranſpoſitions, than to produce a few couplets graced only by naked elegance and ſimple purity, which require ſo much care and ſkill, that I doubt whether any of our authors has yet been able, for twenty lines together, nicely to obſerve the true definition of eaſy poetry.

NUMB. 78. SATURDAY, *October* 13, 1759.

I HAVE paſſed the ſummer in one of thoſe places to which a mineral ſpring gives the idle and luxurious an annual reaſon for reſorting, whenever they fancy themſelves offended by the heat of *London*. What is the true motive of this periodical aſſembly, I have never yet been able to diſcover. The greater part of the viſitants neither feel diſeaſes nor fear them. What pleaſure can be expected more than the variety of the journey, I know not, for the numbers are too great for privacy, and too ſmall for diverſion. As each is known to be a ſpy upon the reſt, they all live in continual reſtraint; and having but a narrow range for cenſure, they gratify its cravings by preying on one another.

But every condition has ſome advantages. In this confinement, a ſmaller circle affords opportunities for more exact obſervation. The glaſs that magnifies its object contracts the ſight to a point, and the mind muſt be fixed upon a ſingle character to remark its minute peculiarities. The quality or habit which paſſes unobſerved in the tumult of ſucceſſive multitudes, becomes conſpicuous when it is offered to the notice day after day; and perhaps I have, without any diſtinct notice, ſeen thouſands like my late companions; for when the ſcene can be varied at pleaſure, a ſlight diſguſt turns us aſide

aſide before a deep impreſſion can be made upon the mind.

There was a ſelect ſett, ſuppoſed to be diſtinguiſhed by ſuperiority of intellects, who always paſſed the evening together. To be admitted to their converſation was the higheſt honour of the place; many youths aſpired to diſtinction, by pretending to occaſional invitations; and the ladies were often wiſhing to be men, that they might partake the pleaſures of learned ſociety.

I know not whether by merit or deſtiny, I was, ſoon after my arrival, admitted to this envied party, which I frequented till I had learned the art by which each endeavoured to ſupport his character.

Tom Steady was a vehement aſſertor of uncontroverted truth; and by keeping himſelf out of the reach of contradiction, had acquired all the confidence which the conſciouſneſs of irreſiſtible abilities could have given. I was once mentioning a man of eminence, and, after having recounted his virtues, endeavoured to repreſent him fully, by mentioning his faults. *Sir*, ſaid Mr. *Steady*, *that he has faults I can eaſily believe, for who is without them? No man, Sir, is now alive, among the innumerable multitudes that ſwarm upon the earth, however wiſe, or however good, who has not, in ſome degree, his failings and his faults. If there be any man faultleſs, bring him forth into publick view, ſhew him openly, and let him be known; but I will venture to affirm, and, till the contrary be plainly ſhewn, ſhall always maintain, that no ſuch man is to be found. Tell not me, Sir, of impeccability and perfection; ſuch*

talk

talk is for thoſe that are ſtrangers in the world: I have ſeen ſeveral nations, and converſed with all ranks of people: I have known the great and the mean, the learned and the ignorant, the old and the young, the clerical and the lay, but I have never found a man without a fault; and I ſuppoſe ſhall die in the opinion, that to be human is to be frail.

To all this nothing could be oppoſed. I liſtened with a hanging head; Mr. *Steady* looked round on the hearers with triumph, and ſaw every eye congratulating his victory; he departed, and ſpent the next morning in following thoſe who retired from the company, and telling them, with injunctions of ſecrecy, how poor *Spritely* began to take liberties with men wiſer than himſelf; but that he ſuppreſſed him by a deciſive argument, which put him totally to ſilence.

Dick Snug is a man of ſly remark and pithy ſententiouſneſs: he never immerges himſelf in the ſtream of converſation, but lies to catch his companions in the eddy: he is often very ſucceſsful in breaking narratives and confounding eloquence. A gentleman, giving the hiſtory of one of his acquaintance, made mention of a lady that had many lovers: *Then*, ſaid Dick, *ſhe was either handſome or rich*. This obſervation being well received, *Dick* watched the progreſs of the tale; and hearing of a man loſt in a ſhipwreck, remarked, that *no man was ever drowned upon dry land*.

Will Starlc is a man of exquiſite ſenſibility, delicacy of frame, and quickneſs of diſcern- ſubject him to impreſſions from the ſlighteſt cauſes,

cauſes; and who therefore paſſes his life between rapture and horror, in quiverings of delight, or convulſions of diſguſt. His emotions are too violent for many words; his thoughts are always diſcovered by exclamations. *Vile, odious, horrid, deteſtable,* and *ſweet, charming, delightful, aſtoniſhing,* compoſe almoſt his whole vocabulary, which he utters with various contortions and geſticulations, not eaſily related or deſcribed.

Jack Solid is a man of much reading, who utters nothing but quotations; but having been, I ſuppoſe, too confident of his memory, he has for ſome time neglected his books, and his ſtock grows every day more ſcanty. Mr. *Solid* has found an opportunity every night to repeat from *Hudibras,*

> Doubtleſs the pleaſure is as great
> Of being cheated, as to cheat.

And from *Waller,*

> Poets loſe half the praiſe they would have got,
> Were it but known that they diſcreetly blot.

Dick Miſty is a man of deep reſearch, and forcible penetration. Others are content with ſuperficial appearances; but *Dick* holds, that there is no effect without a cauſe, and values himſelf upon his power of explaining the difficult, and diſplaying the abſtruſe. Upon a diſpute among us which of two young ſtrangers was more beautiful, *You,* ſays Mr. *Miſty,* turning to me, *like* Amaranthia *better than* Chloris. *I do not wonder at the preference,*

preference, for the cauſe is evident: there is in man a perception of harmony, and a ſenſibility of perfection, which touches the finer fibres of the mental texture; and before reaſon can deſcend from her throne, to paſs her ſentence upon the things compared, drives us towards the object proportioned to our faculties, by an impulſe gentle, yet irreſiſtible; for the harmonick ſyſtem of the univerſe, and the reciprocal magnetiſm of ſimilar natures, are always operating towards conformity and union; nor can the powers of the ſoul ceaſe from agitation, till they find ſomething on which they can repoſe. To this nothing was oppoſed, and *Amaranthia* was acknowledged to excel *Chloris*.

Of the reſt you may expect an account from,

SIR, yours,

ROBIN SPRITELY.

NUMB. 79. SATURDAY, *October* 20, 1759.

To the IDLER.

SIR,

YOUR acceptance of a former letter on painting, gives me encouragement to offer a few more ſketches on the ſame ſubject.

Amongſt the painters, and the writers on painting, there is one maxim univerſally admitted and continually inculcated. *Imitate nature* is the invariable rule; but I know none who have explained in what manner this rule is to be underſtood; the conſequence of which is, that every one takes it in the moſt obvious ſenſe, that objects are repreſented naturally when they have ſuch relief that they ſeem real. It may appear ſtrange, perhaps, to hear this ſenſe of the rule diſputed; but it muſt be conſidered, that if the excellency of a painter conſiſted only in this kind of imitation, painting muſt loſe its rank, and be no longer conſidered as a liberal art, and ſiſter to poetry, this imitation being merely mechanical, in which the ſloweſt intellect is always ſure to ſucceed beſt; for the painter of genius cannot ſtoop to drudgery, in which the underſtanding has no part; and what pretence has the art to claim kindred with poetry, but by its powers over the imagination? To this power the painter of genius directs him; in this ſenſe he ſtudies nature, and often

arrives

arrives at his end, even by being unnatural in the confined ſenſe of the word.

The grand ſtyle of painting requires this minute attention to be carefully avoided, and muſt be kept as ſeparate from it as the ſtyle of poetry from that of hiſtory. Poetical ornaments deſtroy that air of truth and plainneſs which ought to characterize hiſtory; but the very being of poetry conſiſts in departing from this plain narration, and adopting every ornament that will warm the imagination. To deſire to ſee the excellences of each ſtyle united, to mingle the *Dutch* with the *Italian* ſchool, is to join contrarieties which cannot ſubſiſt together, and which deſtroy the efficacy of each other. The *Italian* attends only to the invariable, the great and general ideas which are fixed and inherent in univerſal nature; the *Dutch*, on the contrary, to literal truth and a minute exactneſs in the detail, as I may ſay, of nature modified by accident. The attention to theſe petty peculiarities is the very cauſe of this naturalneſs ſo much admired in the *Dutch* pictures, which, if we ſuppoſe it to be a beauty, is certainly of a lower order, which ought to give place to a beauty of a ſuperior kind, ſince one cannot be obtained but by departing from the other.

If my opinion was aſked concerning the works of *Michael Angelo*, whether they would receive any advantage from poſſeſſing this mechanical merit, I ſhould not ſcruple to ſay they would not only receive no advantage, but would loſe, in a great meaſure, the effect which they now have on every mind ſuſceptible of great and noble ideas. His works may be ſaid to be all genius and ſoul, and why

ſhould they be loaded with heavy matter which can only counteract his purpoſe by retarding the progreſs of the imagination?

If this opinion ſhould be thought one of the wild extravagances of enthuſiaſm, I ſhall only ſay, that thoſe who cenſure it are not converſant in the works of the great maſters. It is very difficult to determine the exact degree of enthuſiaſm that the arts of painting and poetry may admit. There may perhaps be too great an indulgence, as well as too great a reſtraint of imagination; and if the one produces incoherent monſters, the other produces what is full as bad, lifeleſs inſipidity. An intimate knowledge of the paſſions, and good ſenſe, but not common ſenſe, muſt at laſt determine its limits. It has been thought, and I believe with reaſon, that *Michael Angelo* ſometimes tranſgreſſed thoſe limits; and I think I have ſeen figures of him of which it was very difficult to determine whether they were in the higheſt degree ſublime or extremely ridiculous. Such faults may be ſaid to be the ebullitions of genius; but at leaſt he had this merit, that he never was inſipid, and whatever paſſion his works may excite, they will always eſcape contempt.

What I have had under conſideration is the ſublimeſt ſtyle, particularly that of *Michael Angelo*, the *Homer* of painting. Other kinds may admit of this naturalneſs, which of the loweſt kind is the chief merit; but in painting, as in poetry, the higheſt ſtyle has the leaſt of common nature.

One may very ſafely recommend a little more enthuſiaſm to the modern painters; too much is certainly not the vice of the preſent age. The *Italians*

ſeem

ſeem to have been continually declining in this reſpect from the time of *Michael Angelo* to that of *Carlo Maratti*, and from thence to the very bathos of inſipidity to which they are now ſunk; ſo that there is no need of remarking, that where I mentioned the *Italian* painters in oppoſition to the *Dutch*, I mean not the moderns, but the heads of the old *Roman* and *Bolognian* ſchools; nor did I mean to include in my idea of an *Italian* painter, the *Venetian* ſchool, which may be ſaid to be the *Dutch* part of the *Italian* genius. I have only to add a word of advice to the painters, that however excellent they may be in painting naturally, they would not flatter themſelves very much upon it; and to the connoiſſeurs, that when they ſee a cat or a fiddle painted ſo finely, that, as the phraſe is, *It looks as if you could take it up*, they would not for that reaſon immediately compare the painter to *Raffaelle* and *Michael Angelo*.

NUMB. 80. SATURDAY, *October* 27, 1759.

THAT every day has its pains and ſorrows is univerſally experienced, and almoſt univerſally confeſſed; but let us not attend only to mournful truths; if we look impartially about us, we ſhall find that every day has likewiſe its pleaſures and its joys.

The time is now come when the town is again beginning to be full, and the ruſticated beauty ſees an end of her baniſhment. Thoſe whom the tyranny of faſhion had condemned to paſs the ſummer among ſhades and brooks, are now preparing to return to plays, balls, and aſſemblies, with health reſtored by retirement, and ſpirits kindled by expectation.

Many a mind which has languiſhed ſome months without emotion or deſire, now feels a ſudden renovation of its faculties. It was long ago obſerved by *Pythagoras*, that ability and neceſſity dwell near each other. She that wandered in the garden without ſenſe of its fragrance, and lay day after day ſtretched upon a couch behind a green curtain, unwilling to wake and unable to ſleep, now ſummons her thoughts to conſider which of her laſt year's clothes ſhall be ſeen again, and to anticipate the raptures of a new ſuit; the day and the night are now filled with occupation; the laces which were too fine to be worn among ruſticks, are taken from the boxes and reviewed, and the eye is no ſooner cloſed after its labours, than whole ſhops of ſilk buſy the fancy.

But happineſs is nothing if it is not known, and very little if it is not envied. Before the day of departure a week is always appropriated to the payment and reception of ceremonial viſits, at which nothing can be mentioned but the delights of *London*. The lady who is haſtening to the ſcene of action flutters her wings, diſplays her proſpects of felicity, tells how ſhe grudges every moment of delay, and in the preſence of thoſe, whom ſhe knows condemned to ſtay at home, is ſure to wonder by what arts life can be made ſupportable through a winter in the country, and to tell how often amidſt the extaſies of an opera ſhe ſhall pity thoſe friends whom ſhe has left behind. Her hope of giving pain is ſeldom diſappointed; the affected indifference of one, the faint congratulations of another, the wiſhes of ſome openly confeſſed, and the ſilent dejection of the reſt, all exalt her opinion of her own ſuperiority.

But however we may labour for our own deception, truth, though unwelcome, will ſometimes intrude upon the mind. They who have already enjoyed the crowds and noiſe of the great city, know that their deſire to return is little more than the reſtleſſneſs of a vacant mind, that they are not ſo much led by hope as driven by diſguſt, and wiſh rather to leave the country than to ſee the town. There is commonly in every coach a paſſenger enwrapped in ſilent expectation, whoſe joy is more ſincere, and whoſe hopes are more exalted. The virgin whom the laſt ſummer releaſed from her governeſs, and who is now going between her mother and her aunt to try the fortune of her wit and beauty, ſuſpects no fallacy in the gay repreſentation. She believes her-

ſelf

ſelf paſſing into another world, and images *London* as an elyſian region, where every hour has its proper pleaſure, where nothing is ſeen but the blaze of wealth, and nothing heard but merriment and flattery; where the morning always riſes on a ſhow, and the evening cloſes on a ball; where the eyes are uſed only to ſparkle, and the feet only to dance.

Her aunt and her mother amuſe themſelves on the road, with telling her of dangers to be dreaded, and cautions to be obſerved. She hears them as they heard their predeceſſors, with incredulity or contempt. She ſees that they have ventured and eſcaped; and one of the pleaſures which ſhe promiſes herſelf is to detect their falſehoods, and be freed from their admonitions.

We are inclined to believe thoſe whom we do not know, becauſe they never have deceived us. The fair adventurer may perhaps liſten to the *Idler*, whom ſhe cannot ſuſpect of rivalry or malice, yet he ſcarcely expects to be credited when he tells her, that her expectations will likewiſe end in diſappointment.

The uniform neceſſities of human nature produce in a great meaſure uniformity of life, and for part of the day make one place like another: to dreſs and to undreſs, to eat and to ſleep, are the ſame in *London* as in the country. The ſupernumerary hours have indeed a greater variety both of pleaſure and of pain. The ſtranger gazed on by multitudes at her firſt appearance in the Park, is perhaps on the higheſt ſummit of female happineſs; but how great is the anguiſh when the novelty of another face draws her worſhippers away! The heart may leap for a time under a fine gown, but the ſight of a gown yet finer

puts an end to rapture. In the firſt row at an opera two hours may be happily paſſed in liſtening to the muſick on the ſtage, and watching the glances of the company; but how will the night end in deſpondency when ſhe that imagined herſelf the ſovereign of the place, ſees lords contending to lead *Iris* to her chair? There is little pleaſure in converſation to her whoſe wit is regarded but in the ſecond place; and who can dance with eaſe or ſpirit that ſees *Amaryllis* led out before her? She that fancied nothing but a ſucceſſion of pleaſures, will find herſelf engaged without deſign in numberleſs competitions, and mortified without provocation with numberleſs afflictions.

But I do not mean to extinguiſh that ardour which I wiſh to moderate, or to diſcourage thoſe whom I am endeavouring to reſtrain. To know the world is neceſſary, ſince we were born for the help of one another; and to know it early is convenient, if it be only that we may learn early to deſpiſe it. She that brings to *London* a mind well prepared for improvement, though ſhe miſſes her hope of uninterrupted happineſs, will gain in return an opportunity of adding knowledge to vivacity, and enlarging innocence to virtue.

NUMB. 81. SATURDAY, *November* 3, 1759.

AS the *Engliſh* army was paſſing towards *Quebec* along a ſoft ſavanna between a mountain and a lake, one of the petty chiefs of the inland regions ſtood upon a rock ſurrounded by his clan, and from behind the ſhelter of the buſhes contemplated the art and regularity of *European* war. It was evening, the tents were pitched: he obſerved the ſecurity with which the troops reſted in the night, and the order with which the march was renewed in the morning. He continued to purſue them with his eye till they could be ſeen no longer, and then ſtood for ſome time ſilent and penſive.

Then turning to his followers, "My children "(ſaid he) I have often heard from men hoary "with long life, that there was a time when our "anceſtors were abſolute lords of the woods, the "meadows, and the lakes, wherever the eye can "reach or the foot can paſs. They fiſhed and "hunted, feaſted and danced, and when they "were weary lay down under the firſt thicket, "without danger and without fear. They changed "their habitations as the ſeaſons required, con-"venience prompted, or curioſity allured them, "and ſometimes gathered the fruits of the moun-

" tain, and ſometimes ſported in canoes along the " coaſt.

" Many years and ages are ſuppoſed to have " been thus paſſed in plenty and ſecurity; when " at laſt, a new race of men entered our country " from the great ocean. They incloſed themſelves " in habitations of ſtone, which our anceſtors " could neither enter by violence, nor deſtroy by " fire. They iſſued from thoſe faſtneſſes, ſome- " times covered like the armadillo with ſhells, " from which the lance rebounded on the ſtriker, " and ſometimes carried by mighty beaſts which " had never been ſeen in our vales or foreſts, of " ſuch ſtrength and ſwiftneſs, that flight and op- " poſition were vain alike. Thoſe invaders ranged " over the continent, ſlaughtering in their rage " thoſe that reſiſted, and thoſe that ſubmitted, in " their mirth. Of thoſe that remained, ſome were " buried in caverns, and condemned to dig metals " for their maſters; ſome were employed in tilling " the ground, of which foreign tyrants devour the " produce; and when the ſword and the mines " have deſtroyed the natives, they ſupply their " place by human beings of another colour, brought " from ſome diſtant country to periſh here under " toil and torture.

" Some there are who boaſt their humanity, and " content themſelves to ſeize our chaces and " fiſheries, who drive us from every track of " ground where fertility and pleaſantneſs invite " them to ſettle, and make no war upon us except " when we intrude upon our own lands.

" Others

"Others pretend to have purchaſed a right of "reſidence and tyranny; but ſurely the inſolence "of ſuch bargains is more offenſive than the avowed "and open dominion of force. What reward can "induce the poſſeſſor of a country to admit a "ſtranger more powerful than himſelf? Fraud or "terror muſt operate in ſuch contracts; either they "promiſed protection which they never have af-"forded, or inſtruction which they never imparted. "We hoped to be ſecured by their favour from "ſome other evil, or to learn the arts of *Europe*, "by which we might be able to ſecure ourſelves. "Their power they have never exerted in our de-"fence, and their arts they have ſtudiouſly con-"cealed from us. Their treaties are only to de-"ceive, and their traffick only to defraud us. "They have a written law among them, of which "they boaſt as derived from him who made the "earth and ſea, and by which they profeſs to be-"lieve that man will be made happy when life "ſhall forſake him. Why is not this law com-"municated to us? It is concealed becauſe it is "violated. For how can they preach it to an "*Indian* nation, when I am told that one of its "firſt precepts forbids them to do to others "what they would not that others ſhould do to "them?

"But the time perhaps is now approaching "when the pride of uſurpation ſhall be cruſhed, "and the cruelties of invaſion ſhall be revenged. "The ſons of rapacity have now drawn their "ſwords upon each other, and referred their

"claims to the deciſion of war; let us look un-
"concerned upon the ſlaughter, and remember
"that the death of every *European* delivers the
"country from a tyrant and a robber; for what
"is the claim of either nation, but the claim of the
"vulture to the leveret, of the tiger to the fawn?
"Let them then continue to diſpute their title to
"regions which they cannot people, to purchaſe
"by danger and blood the empty dignity of do-
"minion over mountains which they will never
"climb, and rivers which they will never paſs.
"Let us endeavour, in the mean time, to learn
"their diſcipline, and to forge their weapons,
"and when they ſhall be weakened with mutual
"ſlaughter, let us ruſh down upon them, force
"their remains to take ſhelter in their ſhips, and
"reign once more in our native country."

NUMB. 82. SATURDAY, *November* 10, 1759.

To the IDLER.

SIR,

DISCOURSING in my laſt letter on the different practice of the *Italian* and *Dutch* painters, I obſerved that "the *Italian* painter attends only to the invariable, the great and general ideas which are fixed and inherent in univerſal nature."

I was led into the ſubject of this letter by endeavouring to fix the original cauſe of this conduct of the *Italian* maſters. If it can be proved that by this choice they ſelected the moſt beautiful part of the creation, it will ſhew how much their principles are founded on reaſon, and, at the ſame time, diſcover the origin of our ideas of beauty.

I ſuppoſe it will be eaſily granted, that no man can judge whether any animal be beautiful in its kind, or deformed, who has ſeen only one of that ſpecies; that is as concluſive in regard to the human figure; ſo that if a man, born blind, was to recover his ſight, and the moſt beautiful woman was brought before him, he could not determine whether ſhe was handſome or not; nor if the moſt beautiful and moſt deformed were produced, could he any better determine to which he ſhould give the preference, having ſeen only thoſe two. To diſtinguiſh

diſtinguiſh beauty, then, implies the having ſeen many individuals of that ſpecies. If it is aſked, how is more ſkill acquired by the obſervation of greater numbers? I anſwer that, in conſequence of having ſeen many, the power is acquired, even without ſeeking after it, of diſtinguiſhing between accidental blemiſhes and excreſcences which are continually varying the ſurface of nature's works, and the invariable general form which nature moſt frequently produces, and always ſeems to intend in her productions.

Thus amongſt the blades of graſs or leaves of the ſame tree, though no two can be found exactly alike, yet the general form is invariable: A naturaliſt, before he choſe one as a ſample, would examine many, ſince, if he took the firſt that occurred, it might have, by accident or otherwiſe, ſuch a form as that it would ſcarce be known to belong to that ſpecies; he ſelects, as the painter does, the moſt beautiful, that is, the moſt general form of nature.

Every ſpecies of the animal as well as the vegetable creation may be ſaid to have a fixed or determinate form towards which nature is continually inclining, like various lines terminating in the center; or it may be compared to pendulums vibrating in different directions over one central point; and as they all croſs the center, though only one paſſes through any other point, ſo it will be found that perfect beauty is oftener produced by nature than deformity; I do not mean than deformity in general, but than any one kind of deformity. To inſtance

ſtance in a particular part of a feature; the line that forms the ridge of the noſe is beautiful when it is ſtrait; this then is the central form, which is oftener found than either concave, convex, or any other irregular form that ſhall be propoſed. As we are then more accuſtomed to beauty than deformity, we may conclude that to be the reaſon why we approve and admire it, as we approve and admire cuſtoms and faſhions of dreſs for no other reaſon than that we are uſed to them; ſo that though habit and cuſtom cannot be ſaid to be the cauſe of beauty, it is certainly the cauſe of our liking it: and I have no doubt but that if we were more uſed to deformity than beauty, deformity would then loſe the idea now annexed to it, and take that of beauty; as if the whole world ſhould agree, that *yes* and *no* ſhould change their meanings; *yes* would then deny, and *no* would affirm.

Whoever undertakes to proceed further in this argument, and endeavours to fix a general criterion of beauty reſpecting different ſpecies, or to ſhew why one ſpecies is more beautiful than another, it will be required from him firſt to prove that one ſpecies is really more beautiful than another. That we prefer one to the other, and with very good reaſon, will be readily granted; but it does not follow from thence that we think it a more beautiful form; for we have no criterion of form by which to determine our judgment. He who ſays a ſwan is more beautiful than a dove, means little more than that he has more pleaſure in ſeeing a ſwan than a dove, either from the ſtatelineſs of its motions or its being

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a more rare bird; and he who gives the preference to the dove, does it from ſome aſſociation of ideas of innocence that he always annexes to the dove; but if he pretends to defend the preference he gives to one or the other by endeavouring to prove that this more beautiful form proceeds from a particular gradation of magnitude, undulation of a curve, or direction of a line, or whatever other conceit of his imagination he ſhall fix on as a criterion of form, he will be continually contradicting himſelf, and find at laſt that the great mother of nature will not be ſubjected to ſuch narrow rules. Among the various reaſons why we prefer one part of her works to another, the moſt general, I believe, is habit and cuſtom; cuſtom makes, in a certain ſenſe, white black, and black white; it is cuſtom alone determines our preference of the colour of the *Europeans* to the *Æthiopians*, and they, for the ſame reaſon, prefer their own colour to ours. I ſuppoſe nobody will doubt, if one of their painters were to paint the goddeſs of beauty, but that he would repreſent her black, with thick lips, flat noſe, and woolly hair; and it ſeems to me, he would act very unnaturally if he did not: for by what criterion will any one diſpute the propriety of his idea? We, indeed, ſay, that the form and colour of the *European* is preferable to that of the *Æthiopian*; but I know of no other reaſon we have for it, but that we are more accuſtomed to it. It is abſurd to ſay, that beauty is poſſeſſed of attractive powers, which irreſiſtibly ſeize the correſponding mind with love and admiration, ſince that argument

ment is equally concluſive in favour of the white and the black philoſopher.

The black and white nations muſt, in reſpect of beauty, be conſidered as of different kinds, at leaſt a different ſpecies of the ſame kind; from one of which to the other, as I obſerved, no inference can be drawn.

Novelty is ſaid to be one of the cauſes of beauty: that novelty is a very ſufficient reaſon why we ſhould admire, is not denied; but becauſe it is uncommon, is it therefore beautiful? The beauty that is produced by colour, as when we prefer one bird to another, though of the ſame form, on account of its colour, has nothing to do with this argument, which reaches only to form. I have here conſidered the word beauty as being properly applied to form alone. There is a neceſſity of fixing this confined ſenſe; for there can be no argument, if the ſenſe of the word is extended to every thing that is approved. A roſe may as well be ſaid to be beautiful, becauſe it has a fine ſmell, as a bird becauſe of its colour. When we apply the word beauty we do not mean always by it a more beautiful form, but ſomething valuable on account of its rarity, uſefulneſs, colour, or any other property. A horſe is ſaid to be a beautiful animal; but had a horſe as few good qualities as a tortoiſe, I do not imagine that he would be then eſteemed beautiful.

A fitneſs to the end propoſed, is ſaid to be another cauſe of beauty; but ſuppoſing we were proper judges of what form is the moſt proper

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in an animal to conſtitute ſtrength or ſwiftneſs, we always determine concerning its beauty, before we exert our underſtanding to judge of its fitneſs.

From what has been ſaid, it may be inferred, that the works of nature, if we compare one ſpecies with another, are all equally beautiful; and that preference is given from cuſtom, or ſome aſſociation of ideas: and that in creatures of the ſame ſpecies, beauty is the medium or center of all various forms.

To conclude, then, by way of corollary: if it has been proved, that the painter, by attending to the invariable and general ideas of nature, produces beauty, he muſt, by regarding minute particularities and accidental diſcriminations, deviate from the univerſal rule, and pollute his canvas with deformity.

NUMB. 83. SATURDAY, *November* 17, 1759.

To the IDLER.

SIR,

I SUPPOSE you have forgotten that many weeks ago I promiſed to ſend you an account of my companions at the Wells. You would not deny me a place among the moſt faithful votaries of idleneſs, if you knew how often I have recollected my engagement, and contented myſelf to delay the performance for ſome reaſon which I durſt not examine becauſe I knew it to be falſe; how often I have ſat down to write, and rejoiced at interruption; and how often I have praiſed the dignity of reſolution, determined at night to write in the morning, and referred it in the morning to the quiet hours of night.

I have at laſt begun what I have long wiſhed at an end, and find it more eaſy than I expected to continue my narration.

Our aſſembly could boaſt no ſuch conſtellation of intellects as *Clarendon*'s band of aſſociates. We had among us no *Selden*, *Falkland*, or *Waller*; but we had men not leſs important in their own eyes, though leſs diſtinguiſhed by the publick; and many a time have we lamented the partiality of mankind, and agreed that men of the deepeſt enquiry ſometimes let their diſcoveries die away in ſilence, that

the moſt comprehenſive obſervers have ſeldom opportunities of imparting their remarks, and that modeſt merit paſſes in the crowd unknown and unheeded.

One of the greateſt men of the ſociety was Sim Scruple, who lives in a continual equipoiſe of doubt, and is a conſtant enemy to confidence and dogmatiſm. *Sim*'s favourite topick of converſation is the narrowneſs of the human mind, the fallaciouſneſs of our ſenſes, the prevalence of early prejudice, and the uncertainty of appearances. *Sim* has many doubts about the nature of death, and is ſometimes inclined to believe that ſenſation may ſurvive motion, and that a dead man may feel though he cannot ſtir. He has ſometimes hinted that man might perhaps have been naturally a quadruped, and thinks it would be very proper that at the Foundling Hoſpital ſome children ſhould be incloſed in an apartment in which the nurſes ſhould be obliged to walk half upon four and half upon two, that the younglings being bred without the prejudice of example, might have no other guide than nature, and might at laſt come forth into the world as genius ſhould direct, erect or prone, on two legs or on four.

The next in dignity of mien and fluency of talk, was Dick Wormwood, whoſe ſole delight is to find every thing wrong. *Dick* never enters a room but he ſhews that the door and the chimney are ill-placed. He never walks into the fields but he finds ground plowed which is fitter for paſture. He is always an enemy to the preſent faſhion. He holds that all the beauty and virtue of women will ſoon be

be deſtroyed by the uſe of tea. He triumphs when he talks on the preſent ſyſtem of education, and tells us with great vehemence, that we are learning words when we ſhould learn things. He is of opinion that we ſuck in errors at the nurſe's breaſt, and thinks it extremely ridiculous that children ſhould be taught to uſe the right hand rather than the left.

Bob Sturdy conſiders it as a point of honour to ſay again what he has once ſaid, and wonders how any man that has been known to alter his opinion, can look his neighbours in the face. *Bob* is the moſt formidable diſputant of the whole company; for without troubling himſelf to ſearch for reaſons, he tires his antagoniſt with repeated affirmations. When *Bob* has been attacked for an hour with all the powers of eloquence and reaſon, and his poſition appears to all but himſelf utterly untenable, he always cloſes the debate with his firſt declaration, introduced by a ſtout preface of contemptuous civility. "All this is very judicious; "you may talk, Sir, as you pleaſe; but I will ſtill "ſay what I ſaid at firſt." *Bob* deals much in univerſals, which he has now obliged us to let paſs without exceptions. He lives on an annuity, and holds that *there are as many thieves as traders*; he is of loyalty unſhaken, and always maintains, that *he who ſees a Jacobite ſees a raſcal.*

Phil Gentle is an enemy to the rudeneſs of contradiction and the turbulence of debate. *Phil* has no notions of his own, and therefore willingly catches from the laſt ſpeaker ſuch as he ſhall drop. This flexibility of ignorance is eaſily accommo-

dated to any tenet; his only difficulty is, when the diſputants grow zealous, how to be of two contrary opinions at once. If no appeal is made to his judgment, he has the art of diſtributing his attention and his ſmiles in ſuch a manner, that each thinks him of his own party; but if he is obliged to ſpeak, he then obſerves, that the queſtion is difficult; that he never received ſo much pleaſure from a debate before; that neither of the controvertiſts could have found his match in any other company; that Mr. *Wormwood*'s aſſertion is very well ſupported, and yet there is great force in what Mr. *Scruple* advanced againſt it. By this indefinite declaration both are commonly ſatisfied; for he that has prevailed is in good humour; and he that has felt his own weakneſs is very glad to have eſcaped ſo well.

I am, SIR, yours, &c.

ROBIN SPRITELY.

NUMB. 84. SATURDAY, *November* 24, 1759.

BIOGRAPHY is, of the various kinds of narrative writing, that which is moſt eagerly read, and moſt eaſily applied to the purpoſes of life.

In romances, when the wild field of poſſibility lies open to invention, the incidents may eaſily be made more numerous, the viciſſitudes more ſudden, and the events more wonderful; but from the time of life when fancy begins to be over-ruled by reaſon and corrected by experience, the moſt artful tale raiſes little curioſity when it is known to be falſe; though it may, perhaps, be ſometimes read as a model of a neat or elegant ſtyle, not for the ſake of knowing what it contains, but how it is written; or thoſe that are weary of themſelves, may have recourſe to it as a pleaſing dream, of which, when they awake, they voluntarily diſmiſs the images from their minds.

The examples and events of hiſtory preſs, indeed, upon the mind with the weight of truth; but when they are repoſited in the memory, they are oftener employed for ſhew than uſe, and rather diverſify converſation than regulate life. Few are engaged in ſuch ſcenes as give them opportunities of growing wiſer by the downfal of ſtateſmen or the defeat of generals. The ſtratagems of war, and the intrigues of courts, are read by far the greater part of mankind with the ſame indifference as the adventures of fabled heroes, or the revolutions of a fairy

region. Between falſehood and uſeleſs truth there is little difference. As gold which he cannot ſpend will make no man rich, ſo knowledge which he cannot apply will make no man wiſe.

The miſchievous conſequences of vice and folly, of irregular deſires and predominant paſſions, are beſt diſcovered by thoſe relations which are levelled with the general ſurface of life, which tell not how any man became great, but how he was made happy; not how he loſt the favour of his prince, but how he became diſcontented with himſelf.

Thoſe relations are therefore commonly of moſt value in which the writer tells his own ſtory. He that recounts the life of another, commonly dwells moſt upon conſpicuous events, leſſens the familiarity of his tale to increaſe its dignity, ſhews his favourite at a diſtance, decorated and magnified like the ancient actors in their tragick dreſs, and endeavours to hide the man that he may produce a hero.

But if it be true, which was ſaid by a *French* prince, *That no man was a hero to the ſervants of his chamber*, it is equally true, that every man is yet leſs a hero to himſelf. He that is moſt elevated above the crowd by the importance of his employments, or the reputation of his genius, feels himſelf affected by fame or buſineſs but as they influence his domeſtick life. The high and low, as they have the ſame faculties and the ſame ſenſes, have no leſs ſimilitude in their pains and pleaſures. The ſenſations are the ſame in all, though produced by very different occaſions. The prince feels the ſame pain when an invader ſeizes a province, as the farmer

when a thief drives away his cow. Men thus equal in themſelves will appear equal in honeſt and impartial biography; and thoſe whom fortune or nature place at the greateſt diſtance may afford inſtruction to each other.

The writer of his own life has at leaſt the firſt qualification of an hiſtorian, the knowledge of the truth; and though it may be plauſibly objected that his temptations to diſguiſe it are equal to his opportunities of knowing it, yet I cannot but think that impartiality may be expected with equal confidence from him that relates the paſſages of his own life, as from him that delivers the tranſactions of another.

Certainty of knowledge not only excludes miſtake, but fortifies veracity. What we collect by conjecture, and by conjecture only can one man judge of another's motives or ſentiments, is eaſily modified by fancy or by deſire; as objects imperfectly diſcerned take forms from the hope or fear of the beholder. But that which is fully known cannot be falſified but with reluctance of underſtanding, and alarm of conſcience: of underſtanding, the lover of truth; of conſcience, the ſentinel of virtue.

He that writes the life of another is either his friend or his enemy, and wiſhes either to exalt his praiſe or aggravate his infamy; many temptations to falſehood will occur in the diſguiſe of paſſions, too ſpecious to fear much reſiſtance. Love of virtue will animate panegyrick, and hatred of wickedneſs imbitter cenſure. The zeal of grati-

tude, the ardour of patriotiſm, fondneſs for an opinion, or fidelity to a party, may eaſily overpower the vigilance of a mind habitually well diſpoſed, and prevail over unaſſiſted and unfriended veracity.

But he that ſpeaks of himſelf has no motive to falſehood or partiality except ſelf-love, by which all have ſo often been betrayed, that all are on the watch againſt its artifices. He that writes an apology for a ſingle action, to confute an accuſation, to recommend himſelf to favour, is indeed always to be ſuſpected of favouring his own cauſe; but he that ſits down calmly and voluntarily to review his life for the admonition of poſterity, or to amuſe himſelf, and leaves this account unpubliſhed, may be commonly preſumed to tell truth, ſince falſehood cannot appeaſe his own mind, and fame will not be heard beneath the tomb.

NUMB. 85. SATURDAY, *December* 1, 1759.

ONE of the peculiarities which diſtinguiſh the preſent age is the multiplication of books. Every day brings new advertiſements of literary undertakings, and we are flattered with repeated promiſes of growing wiſe on eaſier terms than our progenitors.

How much either happineſs or knowledge is advanced by this multitude of authors, it is not very eaſy to decide.

He that teaches us any thing which we knew not before, is undoubtedly to be reverenced as a maſter. He that conveys knowledge by more pleaſing ways, may very properly be loved as a benefactor; and he that ſupplies life with innocent amuſement, will be certainly careſſed as a pleaſing companion.

But few of thoſe who fill the world with books, have any pretenſions to the hope either of pleaſing or inſtructing. They have often no other taſk than to lay two books before them, out of which they compile a third, without any new materials of their own, and with very little application of judgment to thoſe which former authors have ſupplied.

That all compilations are uſeleſs I do not aſſert. Particles of ſcience are often very widely ſcattered. Writers of extenſive comprehenſion have incidental remarks upon topicks very remote from the principal ſubject, which are often more valuable than

formal treatiſes, and which yet are not known becauſe they are not promiſed in the title. He that collects thoſe under proper heads is very laudably employed, for though he exerts no great abilities in the work, he facilitates the progreſs of others, and by making that eaſy of attainment which is already written, may give ſome mind, more vigorous or more adventurous than his own, leiſure for new thoughts and original deſigns.

But the collections poured lately from the preſs have been ſeldom made at any great expence of time or inquiry, and therefore only ſerve to diſtract choice without ſupplying any real want.

It is obſerved that *a corrupt ſociety has many laws*; I know not whether it is not equally true, that *an ignorant age has many books*. When the treaſures of ancient knowledge lie unexamined, and original authors are neglected and forgotten, compilers and plagiaries are encouraged, who give us again what we had before, and grow great by ſerting before us what our own ſloth had hidden from our view.

Yet are not even theſe writers to be indiſcriminately cenſured and rejected. Truth like beauty varies its faſhions, and is beſt recommended by different dreſſes to different minds; and he that recalls the attention of mankind to any part of learning which time has left behind it, may be truly ſaid to advance the literature of his own age. As the manners of nations vary, new topicks of perſuaſion become neceſſary, and new combinations of imagery are produced; and he that can accommodate himſelf to the reigning taſte, may always have readers

readers who perhaps would not have looked upon better performances.

To exact of every man who writes that he ſhould ſay ſomething new, would be to reduce authors to a ſmall number; to oblige the moſt fertile genius to ſay only what is new, would be to contract his volumes to a few pages. Yet, ſurely, there ought to be ſome bounds to repetition; libraries ought no more to be heaped for ever with the ſame thoughts differently expreſſed, than with the ſame books differently decorated.

The good or evil which theſe ſecondary writers produce is ſeldom of any long duration. As they owe their exiſtence to change of faſhion, they commonly diſappear when a new faſhion becomes prevalent. The authors that in any nation laſt from age to age are very few, becauſe there are very few that have any other claim to notice than that they catch hold on preſent curioſity, and gratify ſome accidental deſire, or produce ſome temporary conveniency.

But however the writers of the day may deſpair of future fame, they ought at leaſt to forbear any preſent miſchief. Though they cannot arrive at eminent heights of excellence, they might keep themſelves harmleſs. They might take care to inform themſelves before they attempt to inform others, and exert the little influence which they have for honeſt purpoſes.

But ſuch is the preſent ſtate of our literature, that the ancient ſage, who thought *a great book a great evil*, would now think the multitude of books a multi-

a multitude of evils. He would conſider a bulky writer who engroſſed a year, and a ſwarm of pamphleteers who ſtole each an hour, as equal waſters of human life, and would make no other difference between them, than between a beaſt of prey, and a flight of locuſts.

NUMB. 86. SATURDAY, *December* 8, 1759.

To the IDLER.

SIR,

I AM a young lady newly married to a young gentleman. Our fortune is large, our minds are vacant, our diſpoſitions gay, our acquaintances numerous, and our relations ſplendid. We conſidered that marriage, like life, has its youth; that the firſt year is the year of gaiety and revel, and reſolved to ſee the ſhews and feel the joys of *London* before the increaſe of our family ſhould confine us to domeſtick cares and domeſtick pleaſures.

Little time was ſpent in preparation; the coach was harneſſed, and a few days brought us to *London*, and we alighted at a lodging provided for us by Miſs *Biddy Trifle*, a maiden niece of my huſband's father, where we found apartments on a ſecond floor, which my couſin told us would ſerve us till we could

could pleaſe ourſelves with a more commodious and elegant habitation, and which ſhe had taken at a very high price, becauſe it was not worth the while to make a hard bargain for ſo ſhort a time.

Here I intended to lie concealed till my new clothes were made, and my new lodging hired; but Miſs *Triſle* had ſo induſtriouſly given notice of our arrival to all her acquaintance, that I had the mortification next day of ſeeing the door thronged with painted coaches and chairs with coronets, and was obliged to receive all my huſband's relations on a ſecond floor.

Inconveniences are often balanced by ſome advantage: the elevation of my apartments furniſhed a ſubject for converſation, which, without ſome ſuch help, we ſhould have been in danger of wanting. Lady *Stately* told us how many years had paſſed ſince ſhe climbed ſo many ſteps. Miſs *Airy* ran to the window, and thought it charming to ſee the walkers ſo little in the ſtreet; and Miſs *Gentle* went to try the ſame experiment, and ſcreamed to find herſelf ſo far above the ground.

They all knew that we intended to remove, and therefore all gave me advice about a proper choice. One ſtreet was recommended for the purity of its air, another for its freedom from noiſe, another for its nearneſs to the park, another becauſe there was but a ſtep from it to all places of diverſion, and another, becauſe its inhabitants enjoyed at once the town and country.

I had civility enough to hear every recommendation with a look of curioſity while it was made, and of acquieſcence when it was concluded, but in my

heart

heart felt no other deſire than to be free from the diſgrace of a ſecond floor, and cared little where I ſhould fix, if the apartments were ſpacious and ſplendid.

Next day a chariot was hired, and Miſs *Triſle* was diſpatched to find a lodging. She returned in the afternoon, with an account of a charming place, to which my huſband went in the morning to make the contract. Being young and unexperienced, he took with him his friend *Ned Quick*, a gentleman of great ſkill in rooms and furniture, who ſees, at a ſingle glance, whatever there is to be commended or cenſured. Mr. *Quick*, at the firſt view of the houſe, declared that it could not be inhabited, for the ſun in the afternoon ſhone with full glare on the windows of the dining-room.

Miſs *Triſle* went out again, and ſoon diſcovered another lodging, which Mr. *Quick* went to ſurvey, and found, that, whenever the wind ſhould blow from the eaſt, all the ſmoke of the city would be driven upon it.

A magnificent ſet of rooms was then found in one of the ſtreets near *Weſtminſter-Bridge*, which Miſs *Triſle* preferred to any which ſhe had yet ſeen; but Mr. *Quick*, having muſed upon it for a time, concluded that it would be too much expoſed in the morning to the fogs that riſe from the river.

Thus Mr. *Quick* proceeded to give us every day new teſtimonies of his taſte and circumſpection; ſometimes the ſtreet was too narrow for a double range of coaches; ſometimes it was an obſcure place, not inhabited by perſons of quality. Some places were dirty, and ſome crowded; in ſome houſes the

furniture

furniture was ill ſuited, and in others the ſtairs were too narrow. He had ſuch fertility of objections that Miſs *Trifle* was at laſt tired, and deſiſted from all attempts for our accommodation.

In the mean time I have ſtill continued to ſee my company on a ſecond floor, and am aſked twenty times a day when I am to leave thoſe odious lodgings, in which I live tumultuouſly without pleaſure, and expenſively without honour. My huſband thinks ſo highly of Mr. *Quick*, that he cannot be perſuaded to remove without his approbation; and Mr. *Quick* thinks his reputation raiſed by the multiplication of difficulties.

In this diſtreſs to whom can I have recourſe? I find my temper vitiated by daily diſappointment, by the ſight of pleaſures which I cannot partake, and the poſſeſſion of riches which I cannot enjoy. Dear Mr. *Idler*, inform my huſband that he is trifling away, in ſuperfluous vexation, the few months which cuſtom has appropriated to delight; that matrimonial quarrels are not eaſily reconciled between thoſe that have no children; that wherever we ſettle he muſt always find ſome inconvenience; but nothing is ſo much to be avoided as a perpetual ſtate of enquiry and ſuſpence.

I am, SIR,

Your humble ſervant,

PIGOU HEARTLESS.

NUMB. 87. SATURDAY, *December* 15, 1759.

OF what we know not, we can only judge by what we know. Every novelty appears more wonderful as it is more remote from any thing with which experience or teſtimony have hitherto acquainted us, and if it paſſes further beyond the notions that we have been accuſtomed to form, it becomes at laſt incredible.

We ſeldom conſider that human knowledge is very narrow, that national manners are formed by chance, that uncommon conjunctures of cauſes produce rare effects, or that what is impoſſible at one time or place may yet happen in another. It is always eaſier to deny than to enquire. To refuſe credit confers for a moment an appearance of ſuperiority, which every little mind is tempted to aſſume when it may be gained ſo cheaply as by withdrawing attention from evidence, and declining the fatigue of comparing probabilities. The moſt pertinacious and vehement demonſtrator may be wearied in time by continual negation; and incredulity, which an old poet, in his addreſs to *Raleigh*, calls *the wit of fools*, obtunds the argument which it cannot anſwer, as woolſacks deaden arrows though they cannot repel them.

Many relations of travellers have been ſlighted as fabulous, till more frequent voyages have confirmed their veracity; and it may reaſonably be imagined, that

that many ancient hiſtorians are unjuſtly ſuſpected of falſehood, becauſe our own times afford nothing that reſembles what they tell.

Had only the writers of antiquity informed us that there was once a nation in which the wife lay down upon the burning pile only to mix her aſhes with thoſe of her huſband, we ſhould have thought it a tale to be told with that of *Endymion*'s commerce with the moon. Had only a ſingle traveller related that many nations of the earth were black, we ſhould have thought the accounts of *Negroes* and of the *Phœnix* equally credible. But of black men the numbers are too great who are now repining under *Engliſh* cruelty, and the cuſtom of voluntary cremation is not yet loſt among the ladies of *India*.

Few narratives will either to men or women appear more incredible than the hiſtories of the *Amazons*; of female nations of whoſe conſtitution it was the eſſential and fundamental law, to exclude men from all participation either of publick affairs or domeſtick buſineſs; where female armies marched under female captains, female farmers gathered the harveſt, female partners danced together, and female wits diverted one another.

Yet ſeveral ages of antiquity have tranſmitted accounts of the *Amazons* of *Caucaſus*; and of the *Amazons* of *America*, who have given their name to their greateſt river in the world, *Condamine* lately found ſuch memorials, as can be expected among erratick and unlettered nations, where events are recorded only by tradition, and new ſwarms ſettling in the country from time to time, confuſe and efface all traces of former times.

To

To die with huſbands, or to live without them, are the two extremes which the prudence and moderation of *European* ladies have, in all ages, equally declined; they have never been allured to death by the kindneſs or civility of the politeſt nations, nor has the roughneſs and brutality of more ſavage countries ever provoked them to doom their male aſſociates to irrevocable baniſhment. The *Bohemian* matrons are ſaid to have made one ſhort ſtruggle for ſuperiority, but inſtead of baniſhing the men they contented themſelves with condemning them to ſervile offices; and their conſtitution, thus left imperfect, was quickly overthrown.

There is, I think, no claſs of *Engliſh* women from whom we are in any danger of *Amazonian* uſurpation. The old maids ſeem neareſt to independence, and moſt likely to be animated by revenge againſt maſculine authority; they often ſpeak of men with acrimonious vehemence, but it is ſeldom found that they have any ſettled hatred againſt them, and it is yet more rarely obſerved that they have any kindneſs for each other. They will not eaſily combine in any p[illegible]; and if they ſhould ever agree to retire and fortify themſelves in caſtles or in mountains, the ſentinel will betray the paſſes in ſpite, and the garriſon will capitulate upon eaſy terms, if the beſiegers have handſome ſword-knots, and are well ſupplied with fringe and lace.

The gameſters, if they were united, would make a formidable body; and ſince they conſider men only as beings that are to loſe their money, they might live

live together without any wiſh for the officiouſneſs of gallantry or the delights of diverſified converſation. But as nothing would hold them together but the hope of plundering one another, their government would fail from the defect of its principles, the men would need only to neglect them, and they would periſh in a few weeks by a civil war.

I do not mean to cenſure the ladies of *England* as defective in knowledge or in ſpirit, when I ſuppoſe them unlikely to revive the military honours of their ſex. The character of the ancient *Amazons* was rather terrible than lovely; the hand could not be very delicate that was only employed in drawing the bow and brandiſhing the battle-axe; their power was maintained by cruelty, their courage was deformed by ferocity, and their example only ſhews that men and women live beſt together.

NUMB. 88. SATURDAY, *December* 22, 1759.

WHEN the philoſophers of the laſt age were firſt congregated into the royal ſociety, great expectations were raiſed of the ſudden progreſs of uſeful arts; the time was ſuppoſed to be near when engines ſhould turn by a perpetual motion, and health be ſecured by the univerſal medicine; when learning ſhould be facilitated by a real character, and commerce extended by ſhips which could reach their ports in defiance of the tempeſt.

But improvement is naturally ſlow. The ſociety met and parted without any viſible diminution of the miſeries of life. The gout and ſtone were ſtill painful, the ground that was not plowed brought no harveſt, and neither oranges nor grapes would grow upon the hawthorn. At laſt, thoſe who were diſappointed began to be angry; thoſe likewiſe who hated innovation were glad to gain an opportunity of ridiculing men who had depreciated, perhaps with too much arrogance, the knowledge of antiquity. And it appears from ſome of their earlieſt apologies, that the philoſophers felt with great ſenſibility the unwelcome importunities of thoſe who were daily aſking, "What have ye done?"

The truth is, that little had been done compared with what fame had been ſuffered to promiſe; and the queſtion could only be anſwered by general apologies and by new hopes, which, when they were

ſruſtrated, gave a new occaſion to the ſame vexatious enquiry.

This fatal queſtion has diſturbed the quiet of many other minds. He that in the latter part of his life too ſtrictly enquires what he has done, can very ſeldom receive from his own heart ſuch an account as will give him ſatisfaction.

We do not indeed ſo often diſappoint others as ourſelves. We not only think more highly than others of our own abilities, but allow ourſelves to form hopes which we never communicate, and pleaſe our thoughts with employments which none ever will allot us, and with elevations to which we are never expected to riſe; and when our days and years have paſſed away in common buſineſs or common amuſements, and we find at laſt that we have ſuffered our purpoſes to ſleep till the time of action is paſt, we are reproached only by our own reflections; neither our friends nor our enemies wonder that we live and die like the reſt of mankind; that we live without notice, and die without memorial; they know not what taſk we had propoſed, and therefore cannot diſcern whether it is finiſhed.

He that compares what he has done with what he has left undone, will feel the effect which muſt always follow the compariſon of imagination with reality; he will look with contempt on his own unimportance, and wonder to what purpoſe he came into the world; he will repine that he ſhall leave behind him no evidence of his having been, that he has added nothing to the ſyſtem of life, but has glided from youth to age among the crowd, without any effort for diſtinction.

Man is ſeldom willing to let fall the opinion of his own dignity, or to believe that he does little only becauſe every individual is a very little being. He is better content to want diligence than power, and ſooner confeſſes the depravity of his will than the imbecillity of his nature.

From this miſtaken notion of human greatneſs it proceeds, that many who pretend to have made great advances in wiſdom ſo loudly declare that they deſpiſe themſelves. If I had ever found any of the ſelf-contemners much irritated or pained by the conſciouſneſs of their meanneſs, I ſhould have given them conſolation by obſerving, that a little more than nothing is as much as can be expected from a being who with reſpect to the multitudes about him is himſelf little more than nothing. Every man is obliged by the ſupreme Maſter of the univerſe to improve all the opportunities of good which are afforded him, and to keep in continual activity ſuch abilities as are beſtowed upon him. But he has no reaſon to repine, though his abilities are ſmall and his opportunities few. He that has improved the virtue or advanced the happineſs of one fellow-creature, he that has aſcertained a ſingle moral propoſition, or added one uſeful experiment to natural knowledge, may be contented with his own performance, and, with reſpect to mortals like himſelf, may demand, like *Auguſtus*, to be diſmiſſed at his departure with applauſe.

NUMB. 89. SATURDAY, *December* 29, 1759.

Ἀνέχου καὶ ἀπέχου. EPICT.

HOW evil came into the world; for what reaſon it is that life is overſpread with ſuch boundleſs varieties of miſery; why the only thinking being of this globe is doomed to think merely to be wretched, and to paſs his time from youth to age in fearing or in ſuffering calamities, is a queſtion which philoſophers have long aſked, and which philoſophy could never anſwer.

Religion informs us that miſery and ſin were produced together. The depravation of human will was followed by a diſorder of the harmony of nature; and by that providence which often places antidotes in the neighbourhood of poiſons, vice was checked by miſery, leſt it ſhould ſwell to univerſal and unlimited dominion.

A ſtate of innocence and happineſs is ſo remote from all that we have ever ſeen, that though we can eaſily conceive it poſſible, and may therefore hope to attain it, yet our ſpeculations upon it muſt be general and confuſed. We can diſcover that where there is univerſal innocence, there will probably be univerſal happineſs; for why ſhould afflictions be permitted to infeſt beings who are not in danger of corruption from bleſſings, and where there is no uſe of terrour nor cauſe of puniſhment?

But in a world like ours, where our ſenſes aſſault us, and our hearts betray us, we ſhould paſs on from crime to crime, heedleſs and remorſeleſs, if miſery did not ſtand in our way, and our own pains admoniſh us of our folly.

Almoſt all the moral good which is left among us, is the apparent effect of phyſical evil.

Goodneſs is divided by divines into ſoberneſs, righteouſneſs, and godlineſs. Let it be examined how each of theſe duties would be practiſed if there were no phyſical evil to enforce it.

Sobriety, or temperance, is nothing but the forbearance of pleaſure; and if pleaſure was not followed by pain, who would forbear it? We ſee every hour thoſe in whom the deſire of preſent indulgence overpowers all ſenſe of paſt and all foreſight of future miſery. In a remiſſion of the gout the drunkard returns to his wine, and the glutton to his feaſt; and if neither diſeaſe nor poverty were felt or dreaded, every one would ſink down in idle ſenſuality, without any care of others, or of himſelf. To eat and drink, and lie down to ſleep, would be the whole buſineſs of mankind.

Righteouſneſs, or the ſyſtem of ſocial duty, may be ſubdivided into juſtice and charity. Of juſtice one of the heathen ſages has ſhewn, with great acuteneſs, that it was impreſſed upon mankind only by the inconveniences which injuſtice had produced. "In the firſt ages," ſays he, "men acted "without any rule but the impulſe of deſire, they "practiſed injuſtice upon others, and ſuffered it "from others in their turn; but in time it was "diſcovered, that the pain of ſuffering wrong was

"greater

"greater than the pleaſure of doing it; and man-
"kind, by a general compact, ſubmitted to the re-
"ſtraint of laws, and reſigned the pleaſure to eſcape
"the pain."

Of charity it is ſuperfluous to obſerve, that it could have no place if there were no want; for of a virtue which could not be practiſed, the omiſſion could not be culpable. Evil is not only the occaſional but the efficient cauſe of charity; we are incited to the relief of miſery by the conſciouſneſs that we have the ſame nature with the ſufferer, that we are in danger of the ſame diſtreſſes, and may ſometimes implore the ſame aſſiſtance.

Godlineſs, or piety, is elevation of the mind towards the Supreme Being, and extenſion of the thoughts of another life. The other life is future, and the Supreme Being is inviſible. None would have recourſe to an inviſible power, but that all other ſubjects had eluded their hopes. None would fix their attention upon the future, but that they are diſcontented with the preſent. If the ſenſes were feaſted with perpetual pleaſure, they would always keep the mind in ſubjection. Reaſon has no authority over us, but by its power to warn us againſt evil.

In childhood, while our minds are yet unoccupied, religion is impreſſed upon them, and the firſt years of almoſt all who have been well educated are paſſed in a regular diſcharge of the duties of piety. But as we advance forward into the crowds of life, innumerable delights ſollicit our inclinations, and innumerable cares diſtract our attention; the time of youth is paſſed in noiſy frolicks; manhood is led

on from hope to hope, and from project to project; the diſſoluteneſs of pleaſure, the inebriation of ſucceſs, the ardour of expectation, and the vehemence of competition, chain down the mind alike to the preſent ſcene, nor is it remembered how ſoon this miſt of trifles muſt be ſcattered, and the bubbles that float upon the rivulet of life be loſt for ever in the gulph of eternity. To this conſideration ſcarce any man is awakened but by ſome preſſing and reſiſtleſs evil. The death of thoſe from whom he derived his pleaſures, or to whom he deſtined his poſſeſſions, ſome diſeaſe which ſhews him the vanity of all external acquiſitions, or the gloom of age, which intercepts his proſpects of long enjoyment, forces him to fix his hopes upon another ſtate, and when he has contended with the tempeſts of life till his ſtrength fails him, he flies at laſt to the ſhelter of religion.

That miſery does not make all virtuous, experience too certainly informs us; but it is no leſs certain that of what virtue there is, miſery produces far the greater part. Phyſical evil may be therefore endured with patience, ſince it is the cauſe of moral good; and patience itſelf is one virtue by which we are prepared for that ſtate in which evil ſhall be no more.

NUMB. 90. SATURDAY, *January* 5, 1760.

IT is a complaint which has been made from time to time, and which ſeems to have lately become more frequent, that *Engliſh* oratory, however forcible in argument, or elegant in expreſſion, is deficient and inefficacious, becauſe our ſpeakers want the grace and energy of action.

Among the numerous projectors who are deſirous to refine our manners, and improve our faculties, ſome are willing to ſupply the deficiency of our ſpeakers. We have had more than one exhortation to ſtudy the neglected art of moving the paſſions, and have been encouraged to believe that our tongues, however feeble in themſelves, may, by the help of our hands and legs, obtain an uncontroulable dominion over the moſt ſtubborn audience, animate the inſenſible, engage the careleſs, force tears from the obdurate, and money from the avaricious.

If by ſlight of hand, or nimbleneſs of foot, all theſe wonders can be performed, he that ſhall neglect to attain the free uſe of his limbs may be juſtly cenſured as criminally lazy. But I am afraid that no ſpecimen of ſuch effects will eaſily be ſhewn. If I could once find a ſpeaker in *Change-Alley* raiſing the price of ſtocks by the power of perſuaſive geſtures, I ſhould very zealouſly recommend the ſtudy of his art; but having never ſeen any action

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by which language was much aſſiſted, I have been hitherto inclined to doubt whether my countrymen are not blamed too haſtily for their calm and motionleſs utterance.

Foreigners of many nations accompany their ſpeech with action; but why ſhould their example have more influence upon us than ours upon them? Cuſtoms are not to be changed but for better. Let thoſe who deſire to reform us ſhew the benefits of the change propoſed. When the *Frenchman* waves his hands and writhes his body in recounting the revolutions of a game at cards, or the *Neapolitan*, who tells the hour of the day, ſhews upon his fingers the number which he mentions, I do not perceive that their manual exerciſe is of much uſe, or that they leave any image more deeply impreſſed by their buſtle and vehemence of communication.

Upon the *Engliſh* ſtage there is no want of action; but the difficulty of making it at once various and proper, and its perpetual tendency to become ridiculous, notwithſtanding all the advantages which art and ſhow, and cuſtom and prejudice, can give it, may prove how little it can be admitted into any other place, where it can have no recommendation but from truth and nature.

The uſe of *Engliſh* oratory is only at the bar, in the parliament, and in the church. Neither the judges of our laws nor the repreſentatives of our people would be much affected by laboured geſticulation, or believe any man the more becauſe he rolled his eyes, or puffed his cheeks, or ſpread abroad his arms, or ſtamped the ground, or thumped his breaſt, or turned his eyes ſometimes to the cieling.

cieling and ſometimes to the floor. Upon men intent only upon truth, the arm of an orator has little power; a credible teſtimony, or a cogent argument, will overcome all the art of modulation, and all the violence of contortion.

It is well known that in the city which may be called the parent of oratory, all the arts of mechanical perſuaſion were baniſhed from the court of ſupreme judicature. The judges of the *Areopagus* conſidered action and vociferation as a fooliſh appeal to the external ſenſes, and unworthy to be practiſed before thoſe who had no deſire of idle amuſement, and whoſe only pleaſure was to diſcover right.

Whether action may not be yet of uſe in churches, where the preacher addreſſes a mingled audience, may deſerve enquiry. It is certain that the ſenſes are more powerful as the reaſon is weaker; and that he whoſe ears convey little to his mind, may ſometimes liſten with his eyes till truth may gradually take poſſeſſion of his heart. If there be any uſe of geſticulation, it muſt be applied to the ignorant and rude, who will be more affected by vehemence than delighted by propriety. In the pulpit little action can be proper, for action can illuſtrate nothing but that to which it may be referred by nature or by cuſtom. He that imitates by his hand a motion which he deſcribes, explains it by natural ſimilitude; he that lays his hand on his breaſt, when he expreſſes pity, enforces his words by a cuſtomary illuſion. But theology has few topicks to which action can be appropriated; that action which is vague and indeterminate will

at laſt ſettle into habit, and habitual peculiarities are quickly ridiculous.

It is perhaps the character of the *Engliſh* to deſpiſe trifles; and that art may ſurely be accounted a trifle which is at once uſeleſs and oſtentatious, which can ſeldom be practiſed with propriety, and which, as the mind is more cultivated, is leſs powerful. Yet as all innocent means are to be uſed for the propagation of truth, I would not deter thoſe who are employed in preaching to common congregations from any practice which they may find perſuaſive; for, compared with the converſion of ſinners, propriety and elegance are leſs than nothing.

NUMB. 91. SATURDAY, *January* 12, 1760.

IT is common to overlook what is near, by keeping the eye fixed upon ſomething remote. In the ſame manner preſent opportunities are neglected, and attainable good is ſlighted, by minds buſied in extenſive ranges, and intent upon future advantages. Life, however ſhort, is made ſtill ſhorter by waſte of time, and its progreſs towards happineſs, though naturally ſlow, is yet retarded by unneceſſary labour.

The difficulty of obtaining knowledge is univerſally confeſſed. To fix deeply in the mind the principles of ſcience, to ſettle their limitations, and deduce

deduce the long ſucceſſion of their conſequences; to comprehend the whole compaſs of complicated ſyſtems, with all the arguments, objections, and ſolutions, and to repoſite in the intellectual treaſury the numberleſs facts, experiments, apophthegms, and poſitions, which muſt ſtand ſingle in the memory, and of which none has any perceptible connection with the reſt, is a taſk which, though undertaken with ardor and purſued with diligence, muſt at laſt be left unfiniſhed by the frailty of our nature.

To make the way to learning either leſs ſhort or leſs ſmooth, is certainly abſurd; yet this is the apparent effect of the prejudice which ſeems to prevail among us in favour of foreign authors, and of the contempt of our native literature, which this excurſive curioſity muſt neceſſarily produce. Every man is more ſpeedily inſtructed by his own language, than by any other; before we ſearch the reſt of the world for teachers, let us try whether we may not ſpare our trouble by finding them at home.

The riches of the *Engliſh* language are much greater than they are commonly ſuppoſed. Many uſeful and valuable books lie buried in ſhops and libraries, unknown and unexamined, unleſs ſome lucky compiler opens them by chance, and finds an eaſy ſpoil of wit and learning. I am far from intending to inſinuate, that other languages are not neceſſary to him who aſpires to eminence, and whoſe whole life is devoted to ſtudy; but to him who reads only for amuſement, or whoſe purpoſe is not to deck himſelf with the honours of literature,

but to be qualified for domeſtick uſefulneſs, and ſit down content with ſubordinate reputation, we have authors ſufficient to fill up all the vacancies of his time, and gratify moſt of his wiſhes for information.

Of our poets I need ſay little, becauſe they are perhaps the only authors to whom their country has done juſtice. We conſider the whole ſucceſſion from *Spenſer* to *Pope*, as ſuperior to any names which the continent can boaſt; and therefore the poets of other nations, however familiarly they may be ſometimes mentioned, are very little read, except by thoſe who deſign to borrow their beauties.

There is, I think, not one of the liberal arts which may not be competently learned in the *Engliſh* language. He that ſearches after mathematical knowledge may buſy himſelf among his own countrymen, and will find one or other able to inſtruct him in every part of thoſe abſtruſe ſciences. He that is delighted with experiments, and wiſhes to know the nature of bodies from certain and viſible effects, is happily placed where the mechanical philoſophy was firſt eſtabliſhed by a publick inſtitution, and from which it was ſpread to all other countries.

The more airy and elegant ſtudies of philology and criticiſm have little need of any foreign help. Though our language, not being very analogical, gives few opportunities for grammatical reſearches, yet we have not wanted authors who have conſidered the principles of ſpeech; and with critical writings we abound ſufficiently to enable pedantry to impoſe rules which can ſeldom be obſerved,

and

and vanity to talk of books which are ſeldom read.

But our own language has, from the reformation to the preſent time, been chiefly dignified and adorned by the works of our divines, who, conſidered as commentators, controvertiſts, or preachers, have undoubtedly left all other nations far behind them. No vulgar language can boaſt ſuch treaſures of theological knowledge, or ſuch multitudes of authors at once learned, elegant, and pious. Other countries and other communions have authors perhaps equal in abilities and diligence to ours; but if we unite number with excellence there is certainly no nation which muſt not allow us to be ſuperior. Of morality little is neceſſary to be ſaid becauſe it is comprehended in practical divinity, and is perhaps better taught in *Engliſh* ſermons than in any other books ancient or modern. Nor ſhall I dwell on our excellence in metaphyſical ſpeculations, becauſe he that reads the works of our divines will eaſily diſcover how far human ſubtilty has been able to penetrate.

Political knowledge is forced upon us by the form of our conſtitution, and all the myſteries of government are diſcovered in the attack or defence of every miniſter. The original law of ſociety, the rights of ſubjects, and the prerogatives of kings, have been conſidered with the utmoſt nicety, ſometimes profoundly inveſtigated, and ſometimes familiarly explained.

Thus copiouſly inſtructive is the *Engliſh* language, and thus needleſs is all recourſe to foreign

writers. Let us not therefore make our neighbours proud by ſoliciting help which we do not want, nor diſcourage our own induſtry by difficulties which we need not ſuffer.

NUMB. 92. SATURDAY, *January* 19, 1760.

WHATEVER is uſeful or honourable will be deſired by many who never can obtain it, and that which cannot be obtained when it is deſired, artifice or folly will be diligent to counterfeit. Thoſe to whom fortune has denied gold and diamonds decorate themſelves with ſtones and metals, which have ſomething of the ſhow but little of the value; and every moral excellence or intellectual faculty has ſome vice or folly which imitates its appearance.

Every man wiſhes to be wiſe, and they who cannot be wiſe are almoſt always cunning. The leſs is the real diſcernment of thoſe whom buſineſs or converſation brings together, the more illuſions are practiſed, nor is caution ever ſo neceſſary as with aſſociates or opponents of feeble minds.

Cunning differs from wiſdom as twilight from open day. He that walks in the ſunſhine goes boldly forward by the neareſt way; he ſees that where the path is ſtreight and even he may proceed in ſecurity, and where it is rough and crooked he eaſily complies with the turns and avoids the obſtructions.

ſtructions. But the traveller in the duſk fears more as he ſees leſs; he knows there may be danger, and therefore ſuſpects that he is never ſafe, tries every ſtep before he fixes his foot, and ſhrinks at every noiſe leſt violence ſhould approach him. Wiſdom comprehends at once the end and the means, eſtimates eaſineſs or difficulty, and is cautious or confident in due proportion. Cunning diſcovers little at a time, and has no other means of certainty than multiplication of ſtratagems and ſuperfluity of ſuſpicion. The man of cunning always conſiders that he can never be too ſafe, and therefore always keeps himſelf enveloped in a miſt, impenetrable, as he hopes, to the eye of rivalry or curioſity.

Upon this principle, *Tom Double* has formed a habit of eluding the moſt harmleſs queſtion. What he has no inclination to anſwer, he pretends ſometimes not to hear, and endeavours to divert the enquirer's attention by ſome other ſubject; but if he be preſſed hard by repeated interrogation, he always evades a direct reply. Aſk him whom he likes beſt on the ſtage? he is ready to tell that there are ſeveral excellent performers. Enquire when he was laſt at the coffee-houſe, he replies, that the weather has been bad lately. Deſire him to tell the age of any of his acquaintance, he immediately mentions another who is older or younger.

Will Puzzle values himſelf upon a long reach. He foreſees every thing before it will happen, though he never relates his prognoſtications till the event is paſt. Nothing has come to paſs for theſe twenty years of which Mr. *Puzzle* had not given broad hints, and told at leaſt that it was not proper

to tell. Of thoſe predictions, which every concluſion will equally verify, he always claims the credit, and wonders that his friends did not underſtand them. He ſuppoſes very truly that much may be known which he knows not, and therefore pretends to know much of which he and all mankind are equally ignorant. I deſired his opinion yeſterday of the *German* war, and was told that if the *Pruſſians* were well ſupported, ſomething great may be expected; but that they have very powerful enemies to encounter, that the *Auſtrian* general has long experience, and the *Ruſſians* are hardy and reſolute; but that no human power is invincible. I then drew the converſation to our own affairs, and invited him to balance the probabilities of war and peace; he told me that war requires courage, and negotiation judgment, and that the time will come when it will be ſeen whether our ſkill in treaty is equal to our bravery in battle. To this general prattle he will appeal hereafter, and will demand to have his foreſight applauded, whoever ſhall at laſt be conquered or victorious.

With *Ned Smuggle* all is a ſecret. He believes himſelf watched by obſervation and malignity on every ſide, and rejoices in the dexterity by which he has eſcaped ſnares that never were laid. *Ned* holds that a man is never deceived if he never truſts, and therefore will not tell the name of his taylor or his hatter; he rides out every morning for the air, and pleaſes himſelf with thinking that nobody knows where he has been; when he dines with a friend he never goes to his houſe the neareſt way, but walks up a bye-ſtreet to perplex the ſcent. When he has

a coach

a coach called, he never tells him at the door the true place to which he is going, but ſtops him in the way that he may give him directions where nobody can hear him. The price of what he buys or ſells is always concealed. He often takes lodgings in the country by a wrong name, and thinks that the world is wondering where he can be hid. All theſe tranſactions he regiſters in a book, which, he ſays, will ſome time or other amaze poſterity.

It is remarked by *Bacon*, that many men try to procure reputation only by objections, of which if they are once admitted the nullity never appears, becauſe the deſign is laid aſide. *This falſe ſhew of wiſdom*, ſays he, *is the ruin of buſineſs*. The whole power of cunning is privative; to ſay nothing, and to do nothing, is the utmoſt of its reach. Yet men thus narrow by nature, and mean by art, are ſometimes able to riſe by the miſcarriages of bravery and the openneſs of integrity; and by watching failures and ſnatching opportunities, obtain advantages which belong properly to higher characters.

NUMB. 93. SATURDAY, *January* 26, 1760.

SAM SOFTLY was bred a ſugar-baker; but ſucceeding to a conſiderable eſtate on the death of his elder brother, he retired early from buſineſs, married a fortune, and ſettled in a country houſe near *Kentiſh-town*. *Sam*, who formerly was a ſportſman, and in his apprenticeſhip uſed to frequent *Barnet* races, keeps a high chaiſe, with a brace of ſeaſoned geldings. During the ſummer months, the principal paſſion and employment of *Sam*'s life is to viſit, in this vehicle, the moſt eminent ſeats of the nobility and gentry in different parts of the kingdom, with his wife and ſome ſelect friends. By theſe periodical excurſions *Sam* gratifies many important purpoſes. He aſſiſts the ſeveral pregnancies of his wife; he ſhews his chaiſe to the beſt advantage; he indulges his inſatiable curioſity for finery, which, ſince he has turned gentleman, has grown upon him to an extraordinary degree; he diſcovers taſte and ſpirit; and, what is above all, he finds frequent opportunities of diſplaying to the party, at every houſe he ſees, his knowledge of family connections. At firſt, *Sam* was contented with driving a friend between *London* and his villa. Here he prided himſelf in pointing out the boxes of the citizens on each ſide of the road, with an accurate detail of their reſpective failures or ſucceſſes in trade; and harangued on the ſeveral equipages that

were accidentally paſſing. Here, too, the ſeats, interſperſed on the ſurrounding hills, afforded ample matter for *Sam*'s curious diſcoveries. For one, he told his companion, a rich *Jew* had offered money; and that a retired widow was courted at another, by an eminent dry-ſalter. At the ſame time he diſcuſſed the utility and enumerated the expences of the *Iſlington* turnpike. But *Sam*'s ambition is at preſent raiſed to nobler undertakings.

When the happy hour of the annual expedition arrives, the ſeat of the chaiſe is furniſhed with *Ogilvy's Book of Roads*, and a choice quantity of cold tongues. The moſt alarming diſaſter which can happen to our hero, who thinks he *throws a whip* admirably well, is to be overtaken in a road which affords no *quarter* for wheels. Indeed, few men poſſeſs more ſkill or diſcernment for concerting and conducting a *party of pleaſure*. When a ſeat is to be ſurveyed, he has a peculiar talent at ſelecting ſome ſhady bench in the park, where the company may moſt commodiouſly refreſh themſelves with cold tongue, chicken, and *French* rolls; and is very ſagacious in diſcovering what cool temple in the garden will be beſt adapted for drinking tea, brought for this purpoſe, in the afternoon, and from which the chaiſe may be reſumed with the greateſt convenience. In viewing the houſe itſelf, he is principally attracted by the chairs and beds, concerning the coſt of which his minute enquiries generally gain the cleareſt information. An agate table eaſily diverts his eyes from the moſt capital ſtrokes of *Rubens*, and a *Turkey* carpet has more charms than a *Titian*. *Sam*, however, dwells with ſome attention

on the family portraits, particularly the moſt modern ones; and as this is a topick on which the houſe-keeper uſually harangues in a more copious manner, he takes this opportunity of improving his knowledge of intermarriages. Yet notwithſtanding this appearance of ſatisfaction, *Sam* has ſome objection to all he ſees. One houſe has too much gilding; at another, the chimney-pieces are all monuments; at a third, he conjectures that the beautiful canal muſt certainly be dried up in a hot ſummer. He deſpiſes the ſtatues at *Wilton*, becauſe he thinks he can ſee much better carving at *Weſtminſter* Abbey. But there is one general objection which he is ſure to make at almoſt every houſe, particularly at thoſe which are moſt diſtinguiſhed. He allows that all the apartments are extremely fine, but adds, with a ſneer, that they are too fine to be inhabited.

Miſapplied genius moſt commonly proves ridiculous. Had *Sam*, as Nature intended, contentedly continued in the calmer and leſs conſpicuous purſuits of ſugar-baking, he might have been a reſpectable and uſeful character. At preſent he diſſipates his life in a ſpecious idleneſs, which neither improves himſelf nor his friends. Thoſe talents which might have benefited ſociety, he expoſes to contempt by falſe pretenſions. He affects pleaſures which he cannot enjoy, and is acquainted only with thoſe ſubjects on which he has no right to talk, and which it is no merit to underſtand.

NUMB. 94. SATURDAY, *February* 2, 1760.

IT is common to find young men ardent and diligent in the purſuit of knowledge; but the progreſs of life very often produces laxity and indifference, and not only thoſe who are at liberty to chuſe their buſineſs and amuſements, but thoſe likewiſe whoſe profeſſions engage them in literary enquiries, paſs the latter part of their time without improvement, and ſpend the day rather in any other entertainment than that which they might find among their books.

This abatement of the vigour of curioſity is ſometimes imputed to the inſufficiency of learning. Men are ſuppoſed to remit their labours, becauſe they find their labours to have been vain; and to ſearch no longer after truth and wiſdom, becauſe they at laſt deſpair of finding them.

But this reaſon is for the moſt part very falſely aſſigned. Of learning, as of virtue, it may be affirmed, that it is at once honoured and neglected. Whoever forſakes it will for ever look after it with longing, lament the loſs which he does not endeavour to repair, and deſire the good which he wants reſolution to ſeize and keep. The idler never applauds his own idleneſs, nor does any man repent of the diligence of his youth.

So many hindrances may obſtruct the acquiſition of knowledge, that there is little reaſon for wonder-

ing that it is in a few hands. To the greater part of mankind the duties of life are inconſiſtent with much ſtudy, and the hours which they would ſpend upon letters muſt be ſtolen from their occupations and their families. Many ſuffer themſelves to be lured by more ſpritely and luxurious pleaſures from the ſhades of contemplation, where they find ſeldom more than a calm delight, ſuch as, though greater than all others, its certainty and its duration being reckoned with its power of gratification, is yet eaſily quitted for ſome extemporary joy, which the preſent moment offers, and another perhaps will put out of reach.

It is the great excellence of learning, that it borrows very little from time or place; it is not confined to ſeaſon or to climate, to cities or to the country, but may be cultivated and enjoyed where no other pleaſure can be obtained. But this quality, which conſtitutes much of its value, is one occaſion of neglect; what may be done at all times with equal propriety, is deferred from day to day, till the mind is gradually reconciled to the omiſſion, and the attention is turned to other objects. Thus habitual idleneſs gains too much power to be conquered, and the ſoul ſhrinks from the idea of intellectual labour and intenſeneſs of meditation.

That thoſe who profeſs to advance learning ſometimes obſtruct it, cannot be denied; the continual multiplication of books not only diſtracts choice, but diſappoints enquiry. To him that has moderately ſtored his mind with images, few writers afford any novelty; or what little they have to add to the common ſtock of learning, is ſo buried in the maſs of

general

general notions, that, like ſilver mingled with the ore of lead, it is too little to pay for the labour of ſeparation; and he that has often been deceived by the promiſe of a title, at laſt grows weary of examining, and is tempted to conſider all as equally fallacious.

There are indeed ſome repetitions always lawful, becauſe they never deceive. He that writes the hiſtory of paſt times, undertakes only to decorate known facts by new beauties of method or of ſtyle, or at moſt to illuſtrate them by his own reflections. The author of a ſyſtem, whether moral or phyſical, is obliged to nothing beyond care of ſelection and regularity of diſpoſition. But there are others who claim the name of authors merely to diſgrace it, and fill the world with volumes only to bury letters in their own rubbiſh. The traveller who tells, in a pompous folio, that he ſaw the *Pantheon* at *Rome*, and the *Medicean Venus* at *Florence*; the natural hiſtorian who, deſcribing the productions of a narrow iſland, recounts all that it has in common with every other part of the world; the collector of antiquities, that accounts every thing a curioſity which the ruins of *Herculaneum* happen to emit, though an inſtrument already ſhewn in a thouſand repoſitories, or a cup common to the ancients, the moderns, and all mankind, may be juſtly cenſured as the perſecutors of ſtudents, and the thieves of that time which never can be reſtored.

NUMB. 95. SATURDAY, *February* 9, 1760.

To the IDLER.

Mr. IDLER,

IT is, I think, univerſally agreed, that ſeldom any good is gotten by complaint; yet we find that few forbear to complain, but thoſe who are afraid of being reproached as the authors of their own miſeries. I hope therefore for the common permiſſion, to lay my caſe before you and your readers, by which I ſhall diſburthen my heart, though I cannot hope to receive either aſſiſtance or conſolation.

I am a trader, and owe my fortune to frugality and induſtry. I began with little; but by the eaſy and obvious method of ſpending leſs than I gain, I have every year added ſomething to my ſtock, and expect to have a ſeat in the common-council at the next election.

My wife, who was as prudent as myſelf, died ſix years ago, and left me one ſon and one daughter, for whoſe ſake I reſolved never to marry again, and rejected the overtures of Mrs. *Squeeze*, the broker's widow, who had ten thouſand pounds at her own diſpoſal.

I bred my ſon at a ſchool near *Iſlington*, and when he had learned arithmetick, and wrote a good hand, I took him into the ſhop, deſigning, in about ten years, to retire to *Stratford* or *Hackney*, and leave him eſtabliſhed in the buſineſs.

For

For four years he was diligent and ſedate, entered the ſhop before it was opened, and when it was ſhut, always examined the pins of the window. In any intermiſſion of buſineſs it was his conſtant practice to peruſe the ledger. I had always great hopes of him, when I obſerved how ſorrowfully he would ſhake his head over a bad debt, and how eagerly he would liſten to me when I told him that he might, at one time or other, become an alderman.

We lived together with mutual confidence, till unluckily a viſit was paid him by two of his ſchool-fellows, who were placed, I ſuppoſe, in the army, becauſe they were fit for nothing better: they came glittering in the military dreſs, accoſted their old acquaintance, and invited him to a tavern, where, as I have been ſince informed, they ridiculed the meanneſs of commerce, and wondered how a youth of ſpirit could ſpend the prime of life behind a counter.

I did not ſuſpect any miſchief. I knew my ſon was never without money in his pocket, and was better able to pay his reckoning than his companions, and expected to ſee him return triumphing in his own advantages, and congratulating himſelf that he was not one of thoſe who expoſe their heads to a muſquet bullet for three ſhillings a day.

He returned ſullen and thoughtful; I ſuppoſed him ſorry for the hard fortune of his friends, and tried to comfort him by ſaying that the war would ſoon be at an end, and that if they had any honeſt occupation, half-pay would be a pretty help. He looked at me with indignation; and ſnatching up his

his candle, told me, as he went up the ſtairs, that *he hoped to ſee a battle yet.*

Why he ſhould hope to ſee a battle, I could not conceive, but let him go quietly to ſleep away his folly. Next day he made two miſtakes in the firſt bill, diſobliged a cuſtomer by ſurly anſwers, and dated all his entries in the journal in a wrong month. At night he met his military companions again, came home late, and quarrelled with the maid.

From this fatal interview he has gradually loſt all his laudable paſſions and deſires. He ſoon grew uſeleſs in the ſhop, where, indeed, I did not willingly truſt him any longer; for he often miſtook the price of goods to his own loſs, and once gave a promiſſory note inſtead of a receipt.

I did not know to what degree he was corrupted, till an honeſt taylor gave me notice that he had beſpoke a laced ſuit, which was to be left for him at a houſe kept by the ſiſter of one of my journeymen. I went to this clandeſtine lodging, and find, to my amazement, all the ornaments of a fine gentleman, which he has taken upon credit, or purchaſed with money ſubducted from the ſhop.

This detection has made him deſperate. He now openly declares his reſolution to be a gentleman; ſays that his ſoul is too great for a counting-houſe, ridicules the converſation of city taverns; talks of new plays, and boxes, and ladies; gives ducheſſes for his toaſts; carries ſilver, for readineſs, in his waiſtcoat-pocket; and comes home at night in a chair, with ſuch thunders at the door, as have more than once brought the watchmen from their ſtands.

Little

Little expences will not hurt us; and I could forgive a few juvenile frolicks, if he would be careful of the main; but his favourite topick is contempt of money, which, he ſays, is of no uſe but to be ſpent. Riches, without honour, he holds empty things; and once told me to my face, that wealthy plodders were only purveyors for men of ſpirit.

He is always impatient in the company of his old friends, and ſeldom ſpeaks till he is warmed with wine; he then entertains us with accounts that we do not deſire to hear, of intrigues among lords and ladies, and quarrels between officers of the guards; ſhews a miniature on his ſnuff-box, and wonders that any man can look upon the new dancer without rapture.

All this is very provoking, and yet all this might be borne, if the boy could ſupport his pretenſions. But whatever he may think, he is yet far from the accompliſhments which he has endeavoured to purchaſe at ſo dear a rate. I have watched him in publick places. He ſneaks in like a man that knows he is where he ſhould not be; he is proud to catch the ſlighteſt ſalutation, and often claims it when it is not intended. Other men receive dignity from dreſs, but my booby looks always more meanly for his finery. Dear Mr. *Idler*, tell him what muſt at laſt become of a fop, whom pride will not ſuffer to be a trader, and whom long habits in a ſhop forbid to be a gentleman.

I am, SIR, &c.

TIM. WAINSCOT.

NUMB. 96. SATURDAY, *February* 16, 1760.

HACHO, a king of *Lapland*, was in his youth the moſt renowned of the northern warriors. His martial atchievements remain engraved on a pillar of flint in the rocks of *Hanga*, and are to this day ſolemnly carrolled to the harp by the *Laplanders*, at the fires with which they celebrate their nightly feſtivities. Such was his intrepid ſpirit, that he ventured to paſs the lake *Vetber* to the iſle of *Wizards*, where he deſcended alone into the dreary vault in which a magician had been kept bound for ſix ages, and read the *Gothick* characters inſcribed on his brazen mace. His eye was ſo piercing, that, as antient chronicles report, he could blunt the weapons of his enemies only by looking at them. At twelve years of age he carried an iron veſſel of a prodigious weight, for the length of five furlongs, in the preſence of all the chiefs of his father's caſtle.

Nor was he leſs celebrated for his prudence and wiſdom. Two of his proverbs are yet remembered and repeated among *Laplanders*. To expreſs the vigilance of the Supreme Being, he was wont to ſay, *Odin's belt is always buckled.* To ſhew that the moſt proſperous condition of life is often hazardous, his leſſon was, *When you ſlide on the ſmoothe*

ſmootheſt ice, beware of pits beneath. He conſoled his countrymen, when they were once preparing to leave the frozen deſarts of *Lapland*, and reſolved to ſeek ſome warmer climate, by telling them, that the eaſtern nations, notwithſtanding their boaſted fertility, paſſed every night amidſt the horrors of anxious apprehenſion, and were inexpreſſibly affrighted, and almoſt ſtunned, every morning, with the noiſe of the ſun while he was riſing.

His temperance and ſeverity of manners were his chief praiſe. In his early years he never taſted wine; nor would he drink out of a painted cup. He conſtantly ſlept in his armour, with his ſpear in his hand; nor would he uſe a battle-ax whoſe handle was inlaid with braſs. He did not, however, perſevere in this contempt of luxury; nor did he cloſe his days with honour.

One evening, after hunting the *Gulos*, or wild-dog, being bewildered in a ſolitary foreſt, and having paſſed the fatigues of the day without any interval of refreſhment, he diſcovered a large ſtore of honey in the hollow of a pine. This was a dainty which he had never taſted before, and being at once faint and hungry, he fed greedily upon it. From this unuſual and delicious repaſt he received ſo much ſatisfaction, that, at his return home, he commanded honey to be ſerved up at his table every day. His palate, by degrees, became refined and vitiated; he began to loſe his native reliſh for ſimple fare, and contracted a habit of indulging himſelf in delicacies; he ordered the delightful

gardens of his caſtle to be thrown open, in which the moſt luſcious fruits had been ſuffered to ripen and decay, unobſerved and untouched, for many revolving autumns, and gratified his appetite with luxurious deſſerts. At length he found it expedient to introduce wine, as an agreeable improvement, or a neceſſary ingredient, to his new way of living; and having once taſted it, he was tempted by little and little, to give a looſe to the exceſſes of intoxication. His general ſimplicity of life was changed; he perfumed his apartments by burning the wood of the moſt aromatick fir, and commanded his helmet to be ornamented with beautiful rows of the teeth of the rein-deer. Indolence and effeminacy ſtole upon him by pleaſing and imperceptible gradations, relaxed the ſinews of his reſolution, and extinguiſhed his thirſt of military glory.

While *Hacbo* was thus immerſed in pleaſure and in repoſe, it was reported to him, one morning, that the preceding night, a diſaſtrous omen had been diſcovered, and that bats and hideous birds had drunk up the oil which nouriſhed the perpetual lamp in the temple of *Odin*. About the ſame time, a meſſenger arrived to tell him, that the king of *Norway* had invaded his kingdom with a formidable army. *Hacbo*, terrified as he was with the omen of the night, and enervated with indulgence, rouzed himſelf from his voluptuous lethargy, and recollecting ſome faint and few ſparks of veteran valour, marched forward to meet him. Both armies joined battle in the foreſt where *Hacbo* had

had been loſt after hunting; and it ſo happened, that the king of *Norway* challenged him to ſingle combat, near the place where he had taſted the honey. The *Lapland* chief, languid and long diſuſed to arms, was ſoon overpowered; he fell to the ground; and before his inſulting adverſary ſtruck his head from his body, uttered this exclamation, which the *Laplanders* ſtill uſe as an early leſſon to their children: "The vicious man ſhould "date his deſtruction from the firſt temptation. "How juſtly do I fall a ſacrifice to ſloth and luxury, "in the place where I firſt yielded to thoſe allure- "ments which ſeduced me to deviate from tempe- "rance and innocence! The honey which I taſted in "this foreſt, and not the hand of the king of *Nor- "way*, conquers *Hacho*."

NUMB. 97. SATURDAY, *February* 23, 1760.

IT may, I think, be juſtly obſerved, that few books diſappoint their readers more than the narrations of travellers. One part of mankind is naturally curious to learn the ſentiments, manners, and condition of the reſt; and every mind that has leiſure or power to extend its views, muſt be deſirous of knowing in what proportion Providence has diſtributed the bleſſings of nature, or the advantages of art, among the ſeveral nations of the earth.

This general deſire eaſily procures readers to every book from which it can expect gratification. The adventurer upon unknown coaſts, and the deſcriber of diſtant regions, is always welcomed as a man who has laboured for the pleaſure of others, and who is able to enlarge our knowledge and rectify our opinions; but when the volume is opened, nothing is found but ſuch general accounts as leave no diſtinct idea behind them, or ſuch minute enumerations as few can read with either profit or delight.

Every writer of travels ſhould conſider, that, like all other authors, he undertakes either to inſtruct or pleaſe, or to mingle pleaſure with inſtruction. He that inſtructs muſt offer to the mind ſomething to be imitated, or ſomething to be avoided; he that pleaſes muſt offer new images to his reader, and enable him to form a tacit compariſon of his own ſtate with that of others.

The

The greater part of travellers tell nothing, becauſe their method of travelling ſupplies them with nothing to be told. He that enters a town at night and ſurveys it in the morning, and then haſtens away to another place, and gueſſes at the manners of the inhabitants by the entertainment which his inn afforded him, may pleaſe himſelf for a time with a haſty change of ſcenes, and a confuſed remembrance of palaces and churches; he may gratify his eye with variety of landſcapes; and regale his palate with a ſucceſſion of vintages; but let him be contented to pleaſe himſelf without endeavour to diſturb others. Why ſhould he record excurſions by which nothing could be learned, or wiſh to make a ſhow of knowledge which, without ſome power of intuition unknown to other mortals, he never could attain?

Of thoſe who crowd the world with their itineraries, ſome have no other purpoſe than to deſcribe the face of the country; thoſe who ſit idle at home, and are curious to know what is done or ſuffered in diſtant countries, may be informed by one of theſe wanderers, that on a certain day he ſet out early with the caravan, and in the firſt hour's march ſaw, towards the ſouth, a hill covered with trees, then paſſed over a ſtream, which ran northward with a ſwift courſe, but which is probably dry in the ſummer months; that an hour after he ſaw ſomething to the right which looked at a diſtance like a caſtle with towers, but which he diſcovered afterwards to be a craggy rock; that he then entered a valley, in which he ſaw ſeveral trees tall and flouriſhing, watered by a rivulet not marked in the maps, of which

he was not able to learn the name; that the road afterward grew ſtony, and the country uneven, where he obſerved among the hills many hollows worn by torrents, and was told that the road was paſſable only part of the year; that going on they found the remains of a building, once perhaps a fortreſs to ſecure the paſs, or to reſtrain the robbers, of which the preſent inhabitants can give no other account than that it is haunted by fairies; that they went to dine at the foot of a rock, and travelled the reſt of the day along the banks of a river, from which the road turned aſide towards evening, and brought them within ſight of a village, which was once a conſiderable town, but which afforded them neither good victuals nor commodious lodging.

Thus he conducts his reader through wet and dry, over rough and ſmooth, without incidents, without reflection; and, if he obtains his company for another day, will diſmiſs him again at night, equally fatigued with a like ſucceſſion of rocks and ſtreams, mountains and ruins.

This is the common ſtyle of thoſe ſons of enterprize, who viſit ſavage countries, and range through ſolitude and deſolation; who paſs a deſert, and tell that it is ſandy; who croſs a valley, and find that it is green. There are others of more delicate ſenſibility, that viſit only the realms of elegance and ſoftneſs; that wander through *Italian* palaces, and amuſe the gentle reader with catalogues of pictures; that hear maſſes in magnificent churches, and recount the number of the pillars or variegations of the pavement. And there are yet others, who, in diſdain of trifles, copy inſcriptions elegant and

rude,

rude, ancient and modern; and tranſcribe into their book the walls of every edifice, ſacred or civil. He that reads theſe books muſt conſider his labour as its own reward; for he will find nothing on which attention can fix, or which memory can retain.

He that would travel for the entertainment of others, ſhould remember that the great object of remark is human life. Every nation has ſomething particular in its manufactures, its works of genius, its medicines, its agriculture, its cuſtoms, and its policy. He only is a uſeful traveller, who brings home ſomething by which his country may be benefited; who procures ſome ſupply of want or ſome mitigation of evil, which may enable his readers to compare their condition with that of others, to improve it whenever it is worſe, and whenever it is better to enjoy it.

NUMB. 98. SATURDAY, *March* 1, 1760.

To the IDLER.

SIR,

I AM the daughter of a gentleman, who during his life-time enjoyed a ſmall income which aroſe from a penſion from the court, by which he was enabled to live in a genteel and comfortable manner.

By the ſituation in life in which he was placed, he was frequently introduced into the company of thoſe of much greater fortunes than his own, among whom he was always received with complaiſance, and treated with civility.

At ſix years of age I was ſent to a boarding ſchool in the country, at which I continued till my father's death. This melancholy event happened at a time when I was by no means of ſufficient age to manage for myſelf, while the paſſions of youth continued unſubdued, and before experience could guide my ſentiments or my actions.

I was then taken from ſchool by an uncle, to the care of whom my father had committed me on his dying bed. With him I lived ſeveral years, and as he was unmarried, the management of his family was committed to me. In this character I always endeavoured to acquit myſelf, if not with applauſe, at leaſt without cenſure.

At the age of twenty-one a young gentleman of ſome fortune paid his addreſſes to me, and offered me terms of marriage. This propoſal I ſhould readily have accepted, becauſe from vicinity of reſidence, and from many opportunities of obſerving his behaviour, I had in ſome ſort contracted an affection for him. My uncle, for what reaſon I do not know, refuſed his conſent to this alliance, though it would have been complied with by the father of the young gentleman; and as the future condition of my life was wholly dependent on him, I was not willing to diſoblige him, and therefore, though unwillingly, declined the offer.

My uncle, who poſſeſſed a plentiful fortune, frequently hinted to me in converſation, that at his death I ſhould be provided for in ſuch a manner that I ſhould be able to make my future life comfortable and happy. As this promiſe was often repeated, I was the leſs anxious about any proviſion for myſelf. In a ſhort time my uncle was taken ill, and though all poſſible means were made uſe of for his recovery, in a few days he died.

The ſorrow ariſing from the loſs of a relation, by whom I had been always treated with the greateſt kindneſs, however grievous, was not the worſt of my misfortunes. As he enjoyed an almoſt uninterrupted ſtate of health, he was the leſs mindful of his diſſolution, and died inteſtate; by which means his whole fortune devolved to a nearer relation, the heir at law.

Thus excluded from all hopes of living in the manner with which I have ſo long flattered myſelf, I am doubtful what method I ſhall take to procure a decent maintenance. I have been educated in a manner that has ſet me above a ſtate of ſervitude, and my ſituation renders me unfit for the company of thoſe with whom I have hitherto converſed. But, though diſappointed in my expectations, I do not deſpair. I will hope that aſſiſtance may ſtill be obtained for innocent diſtreſs, and that friendſhip, though rare, is yet not impoſſible to be found.

I am, SIR,

Your humble ſervant,

SOPHIA HEEDFULL.

NUMB. 99. SATURDAY, *March* 8, 1760.

AS *Ortogrul* of *Baſra* was one day wandering along the ſtreets of *Bagdat*, muſing on the varieties of merchandiſe which the ſhops offered to his view, and obſerving the different occupations which buſied the multitudes on every ſide, he was awakened from the tranquillity of meditation by a crowd that obſtructed his paſſage. He raiſed his eyes, and ſaw the chief viſier, who, having returned from the divan, was entering his palace.

Ortogrul mingled with the attendants, and being ſuppoſed to have ſome petition for the viſier, was permitted to enter. He ſurveyed the ſpaciouſneſs of the apartments, admired the walls hung with golden tapeſtry, and the floors covered with ſilken carpets, and deſpiſed the ſimple neatneſs of his own little habitation.

Surely, ſaid he to himſelf, this palace is the ſeat of happineſs, where pleaſure ſucceeds to pleaſure, and diſcontent and ſorrow can have no admiſſion. Whatever nature has provided for the delight of ſenſe, is here ſpread forth to be enjoyed. What can mortals hope or imagine, which the maſter of this palace has not obtained? The diſhes of luxury cover his table, the voice of harmony lulls him in his bowers; he breathes the fragrance of the groves of *Java*, and ſleeps upon the down

of

of the cygnets of *Ganges*. He ſpeaks and his mandate is obeyed, he wiſhes and his wiſh is gratified; all whom he ſees obey him, and all whom he hears flatter him. How different, *Ortogrul*, is thy condition, who art doomed to the perpetual torments of unſatisfied deſire, and who haſt no amuſement in thy power that can withhold thee from thy own reflections! They tell thee that thou art wiſe; but what does wiſdom avail with poverty? None will flatter the poor, and the wiſe have very little power of flattering themſelves. That man is ſurely the moſt wretched of the ſons of wretchedneſs, who lives with his own faults and follies always before him, and who has none to reconcile him to himſelf by praiſe and veneration. I have long ſought content, and have not found it; I will from this moment endeavour to be rich.

Full of his new reſolution, he ſhut himſelf in his chamber for ſix months, to deliberate how he ſhould grow rich; he ſometimes purpoſed to offer himſelf as a counſellor to one of the kings of *India*, and ſometimes reſolved to dig for diamonds in the mines of *Golconda*. One day, after ſome hours paſſed in violent fluctuation of opinion, ſleep inſenſibly ſeized him in his chair; he dreamed that he was ranging a deſart country in ſearch of ſome one that might teach him to grow rich; and as he ſtood on the top of a hill ſhaded with cypreſs, in doubt whither to direct his ſteps, his father appeared on a ſudden ſtanding before him. *Ortogrul*, ſaid the old man, I know thy perplexity; liſten to thy father; turn thine eye on the oppoſite mountain. *Ortogrul* looked, and ſaw a torrent tumbling

down

down the rocks, roaring with the noiſe of thunder, and ſcattering its foam on the impending woods. Now, ſaid his father, behold the valley that lies between the hills. *Ortogrul* looked, and eſpied a little well, out of which iſſued a ſmall rivulet. Tell me now, ſaid his father, doſt thou wiſh for ſudden affluence, that may pour upon thee like the mountain torrent, or for a ſlow and gradual encreaſe, reſembling the rill gliding from the well? Let me be quickly rich, ſaid *Ortogrul*; let the golden ſtream be quick and violent. Look round thee, ſaid his father, once again. *Ortogrul* looked, and perceived the channel of the torrent dry and duſty; but following the rivulet from the well, he traced it to a wide lake, which the ſupply, ſlow and conſtant, kept always full. He waked, and determined to grow rich by ſilent profit, and perſevering induſtry.

Having ſold his patrimony, he engaged in merchandiſe, and in twenty years purchaſed lands on which he raiſed a houſe, equal in ſumptuouſneſs to that of the viſier, to which he invited all the miniſters of pleaſure, expecting to enjoy all the felicity which he had imagined riches able to afford. Leiſure ſoon made him weary of himſelf, and he longed to be perſuaded that he was great and happy. He was courteous and liberal; he gave all that approached him hopes of pleaſing him, and all who ſhould pleaſe him hopes of being rewarded. Every art of praiſe was tried, and every ſource of adulatory fiction was exhauſted. *Ortogrul* heard his flatterers without delight, becauſe he found himſelf unable to believe them. His own heart told him its frail-

ties, his own underſtanding reproached him with his faults. How long, ſaid he, with a deep ſigh, have I been labouring in vain to amaſs wealth which at laſt is uſeleſs. Let no man hereafter wiſh to be rich, who is already too wiſe to be flattered.

NUMB. 100. SATURDAY, *March* 15, 1760.

To the IDLER.

SIR,

THE uncertainty and defects of language have produced very frequent complaints among the learned; yet there ſtill remain many words among us undefined, which are very neceſſary to be rightly underſtood, and which produce very miſchievous miſtakes when they are erroneouſly interpreted.

I lived in a ſtate of celibacy beyond the uſual time. In the hurry firſt of pleaſure, and afterwards of buſineſs, I felt no want of a domeſtick companion; but becoming weary of labour, I ſoon grew more weary of idleneſs, and thought it reaſonable to follow the cuſtom of life, and to ſeek ſome ſolace of my cares in female tenderneſs, and ſome amuſement of my leiſure in female cheerfulneſs.

The choice which has been long delayed is commonly made at laſt with great caution. My reſolution was, to keep my paſſions neutral, and to marry

marry only in compliance with my reaſon. I drew upon a page of my pocket-book a ſcheme of all female virtues and vices, with the vices which border upon every virtue, and the virtues which are allied to every vice. I conſidered that wit was ſarcaſtick, and magnanimity imperious; that avarice was œconomical, and ignorance obſequious; and having eſtimated the good and evil of every quality, employed my own diligence and that of my friends to find the lady in whom nature and reaſon had reached that happy mediocrity which is equally remote from exuberance and deficience.

Every woman had her admirers and her cenſurers, and the expectations which one raiſed were by another quickly depreſſed: yet there was one in whoſe favour almoſt all ſuffrages concurred. Miſs *Gentle* was univerſally allowed to be a good ſort of woman. Her fortune was not large, but ſo prudently managed, that ſhe wore finer clothes and ſaw more company than many who were known to be twice as rich. Miſs *Gentle*'s viſits were every where welcome, and whatever family ſhe favoured with her company, ſhe always left behind her ſuch a degree of kindneſs as recommended her to others; every day extended her acquaintance, and all who knew her declared that they never met with a better ſort of woman.

To Miſs *Gentle* I made my addreſſes, and was received with great equality of temper. She did not in the days of courtſhip aſſume the privilege of impoſing rigorous commands, or reſenting ſlight offences. If I forgot any of her injunctions, I was gently

gently reminded; if I miſſed the minute of appointment, I was eaſily forgiven. I foreſaw nothing in marriage but a halcyon calm, and longed for the happineſs which was to be found in the inſeparable ſociety of a good ſort of woman.

The jointure was ſoon ſettled by the intervention of friends, and the day came in which Miſs *Gentle* was made mine for ever. The firſt month was paſſed eaſily enough in receiving and repaying the civilities of our friends. The bride practiſed with great exactneſs all the niceties of ceremony, and diſtributed her notice in the moſt punctilious proportions to the friends who ſurrounded us with their happy auguries.

But the time ſoon came when we were left to ourſelves, and were to receive our pleaſures from each other, and I then began to perceive that I was not formed to be much delighted by a good ſort of woman. Her great principle is, that the orders of a family muſt not be broken. Every hour of the day has its employment inviolably appropriated, nor will any importunity perſuade her to walk in the garden at the time which ſhe has devoted to her needlework, or to ſit up ſtairs in that part of the forenoon which ſhe has accuſtomed herſelf to ſpend in the back parlour. She allows herſelf to ſit half an hour after breakfaſt, and an hour after dinner; while I am talking or reading to her, ſhe keeps her eye upon her watch, and when the minute of departure comes, will leave an argument unfiniſhed, or the intrigue of a play unravelled. She once called me

to

to ſupper when I was watching an eclipſe, and ſummoned me at another time to bed when I was going to give directions at a fire.

Her converſation is ſo habitually cautious, that ſhe never talks to me but in general terms, as to one whom it is dangerous to truſt. For diſcriminations of character ſhe has no names: all whom ſhe mentions are honeſt men and agreeable women. She ſmiles not by ſenſation, but by practice. Her laughter is never excited but by a joke, and her notion of a joke is not very delicate. The repetition of a good joke does not weaken its effect; if ſhe has laughed once, ſhe will laugh again.

She is an enemy to nothing but ill-nature and pride, but ſhe has frequent reaſon to lament that they are ſo frequent in the world. All who are not equally pleaſed with the good and bad, with the elegant and groſs, with the witty and the dull, all who diſtinguiſh excellence from defect, ſhe conſiders as ill-natured; and ſhe condemns as proud all who repreſs impertinence or quell preſumption, or expect reſpect from any other eminence than that of fortune, to which ſhe is always willing to pay homage.

There are none whom ſhe openly hates; for if once ſhe ſuffers, or believes herſelf to ſuffer, any contempt or inſult, ſhe never diſmiſſes it from her mind, but takes all opportunities to tell how eaſily ſhe can forgive. There are none whom ſhe loves much better than others; for when any of her acquaintance decline in the opinion of the world, ſhe always finds it inconvenient to viſit them; her affection continues unaltered, but it is impoſſible to be intimate with the whole town.

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She daily exerciſes her benevolence by pitying every misfortune that happens to every family within her circle of notice; ſhe is in hourly terrors leſt one ſhould catch cold in the rain, and another be frighted by the high wind. Her charity ſhe ſhews by lamenting that ſo many poor wretches ſhould languiſh in the ſtreets, and by wondering what the great can think on that they do ſo little good with ſuch large eſtates.

Her houſe is elegant and her table dainty, though ſhe has little taſte of elegance, and is wholly free from vicious luxury; but ſhe comforts herſelf that nobody can ſay that her houſe is dirty, or that her diſhes are not well dreſt.

This, Mr. *Idler*, I have found by long experience to be the character of a good ſort of woman, which I have ſent you for the information of thoſe by whom *a good ſort of woman*, and *a good woman*, may happen to be uſed as equivalent terms, and who may ſuffer by the miſtake, like

Your humble ſervant,

TIM WARNER.

NUMB. 101. SATURDAY, *March* 22, 1760.

OMAR, the ſon of *Huſſan*, had paſſed ſeventy-five years in honour and proſperity. The favour of three ſucceſſive califs had filled his houſe with gold and ſilver, and whenever he appeared, the benedictions of the people proclaimed his paſſage.

Terreſtrial happineſs is of ſhort continuance. The brightneſs of the flame is waſting its fuel; the fragrant flower is paſſing away in its own odours. The vigour of *Omar* began to fail, the curls of beauty fell from his head, ſtrength departed from his hands, and agility from his feet. He gave back to the calif the keys of truſt and the ſeals of ſecrecy, and ſought no other pleaſure for the remains of life than the converſe of the wiſe, and the gratitude of the good.

The powers of his mind were yet unimpaired. His chamber was filled by viſitants, eager to catch the dictates of experience, and officious to pay the tribute of admiration. *Caled*, the ſon of the viceroy of *Egypt*, entered every day early, and retired late. He was beautiful and eloquent; *Omar* admired his wit, and loved his docility. Tell me, ſaid *Caled*, thou to whoſe voice nations have liſtened, and whoſe wiſdom is known to the extremities of *Aſia*, tell me how I may reſemble *Omar* the prudent. The arts by which you have gained power and pre-

ſerved it, are to you no longer neceſſary or uſeful; impart to me the ſecret of your conduct, and teach me the plan upon which your wiſdom has built your fortune.

Young man, ſaid *Omar*, it is of little uſe to form plans of life. When I took my firſt ſurvey of the world, in my twentieth year, having conſidered the various conditions of mankind, in the hour of ſolitude I ſaid thus to myſelf, leaning againſt a cedar which ſpread its branches over my head: Seventy years are allowed to man; I have yet fifty remaining: ten years I will allot to the attainment of knowledge, and ten I will paſs in foreign countries; I ſhall be learned, and therefore ſhall be honoured; every city will ſhout at my arrival, and every ſtudent will ſolicit my friendſhip. Twenty years thus paſſed will ſtore my mind with images, which I ſhall be buſy through the reſt of my life in combining and comparing. I ſhall revel in inexhauſtible accumulations of intellectual riches; I ſhall find new pleaſures for every moment, and ſhall never more be weary of myſelf. I will, however, not deviate too far from the beaten track of life, but will try what can be found in female delicacy. I will marry a wife beautiful as the *Houries*, and wiſe as *Zobeide*; with her I will live twenty years within the ſuburbs of *Bagdat*, in every pleaſure that wealth can purchaſe, and fancy can invent. I will then retire to a rural dwelling, paſs my laſt days in obſcurity and contemplation, and lie ſilently down on the bed of death. Through my life it ſhall be my ſettled reſolution, that I will never depend upon the ſmile of princes; that I will never ſtand expoſed

to the artifices of courts; I will never pant for publick honours, nor diſturb my quiet with affairs of ſtate. Such was my ſcheme of life, which I impreſſed indelibly upon my memory.

The firſt part of my enſuing time was to be ſpent in ſearch of knowledge, and I know not how I was diverted from my deſign. I had no viſible impediments without, nor any ungovernable paſſions within. I regarded knowledge as the higheſt honour and the moſt engaging pleaſure; yet day ſtole upon day, and month glided after month, till I found that ſeven years of the firſt ten had vaniſhed, and left nothing behind them. I now poſtponed my purpoſe of travelling; for why ſhould I go abroad while ſo much remained to be learned at home? I immured myſelf for four years, and ſtudied the laws of the empire. The fame of my ſkill reached the judges; I was found able to ſpeak upon doubtful queſtions, and was commanded to ſtand at the foot-ſtool of the calif. I was heard with attention, I was conſulted with confidence, and the love of praiſe faſtened on my heart.

I ſtill wiſhed to ſee diſtant countries, liſtened with rapture to the relations of travellers, and reſolved ſome time to aſk my diſmiſſion, that I might feaſt my ſoul with novelty; but my preſence was always neceſſary, and the ſtream of buſineſs hurried me along. Sometimes I was afraid leſt I ſhould be charged with ingratitude; but I ſtill propoſed to travel, and therefore would not confine myſelf by marriage.

In my fiftieth year I began to ſuſpect that the time of travelling was paſt, and thought it beſt to

lay hold on the felicity yet in my power, and indulge myſelf in domeſtick pleaſures. But at fifty no man eaſily finds a woman beautiful as the *Houries*, and wiſe as *Zobeide*. I enquired and rejected, conſulted and deliberated, till the ſixty-ſecond year made me aſhamed of gazing upon girls. I had now nothing left but retirement, and for retirement I never found a time, till diſeaſe forced me from publick employment.

Such was my ſcheme, and ſuch has been its conſequence. With an inſatiable thirſt for knowledge, I trifled away the years of improvement; with a reſtleſs deſire of ſeeing different countries, I have always reſided in the ſame city; with the higheſt expectation of connubial felicity, I have lived unmarried; and with unalterable reſolutions of contemplative retirement, I am going to die within the walls of *Bagdat*.

NUMB. 102. SATURDAY, *March* 29, 1760.

IT very ſeldom happens to man that his buſineſs is his pleaſure. What is done from neceſſity, is ſo often to be done when againſt the preſent inclination, and ſo often fills the mind with anxiety, that an habitual diſlike ſteals upon us, and we ſhrink involuntarily from the remembrance of our taſk. This is the reaſon why almoſt every one wiſhes to quit his employment; he does not like another ſtate, but is diſguſted with his own.

From this unwillingneſs to perform more than is required of that which is commonly performed with reluctance, it proceeds that few authors write their own lives. Stateſmen, courtiers, ladies, generals, and ſeamen, have given to the world their own ſtories, and the events with which their different ſtations have made them acquainted. They retired to the cloſet as to a place of quiet and amuſement, and pleaſed themſelves with writing, becauſe they could lay down the pen whenever they were weary. But the author, however conſpicuous, or however important, either in the publick eye or in his own, leaves his life to be related by his ſucceſſors, for he cannot gratify his vanity but by ſacrificing his eaſe.

It is commonly ſuppoſed that the uniformity of a ſtudious life affords no matter for narration: but the truth is, that of the moſt ſtudious life a great part paſſes without ſtudy. An author par-

takes of the common condition of humanity; he is born and married like another man; he has hopes and fears, expectations and diſappointments, griefs and joys, and friends and enemies, like a courtier or a ſtateſman; nor can I conceive why his affairs ſhould not excite curioſity as much as the whiſper of a drawing-room, or the factions of a camp.

Nothing detains the reader's attention more powerfully than deep involutions of diſtreſs, or ſudden viciſſitudes of fortune; and theſe might be abundantly afforded by memoirs of the ſons of literature. They are intangled by contracts which they know not how to fulfil, and obliged to write on ſubjects which they do not underſtand. Every publication is a new period of time from which ſome encreaſe or declenſion of fame is to be reckoned. The gradations of a hero's life are from battle to battle, and of an author's from book to book.

Succeſs and miſcarriage have the ſame effects in all conditions. The proſperous are feared, hated, and flattered; and the unfortunate avoided, pitied, and deſpiſed. No ſooner is a book publiſhed than the writer may judge of the opinion of the world. If his acquaintance preſs round him in publick places, or ſalute him from the other ſide of the ſtreet, if invitations to dinner come thick upon him, and thoſe with whom he dines keep him to ſupper; if the ladies turn to him when his coat is plain, and the footmen ſerve him with attention and alacrity; he may be ſure that his work has been praiſed by ſome leader of literary faſhions.

Of declining reputation the ſymptoms are not leſs eaſily obſerved. If the author enters a coffee-

houſe,

houſe, he has a box to himſelf; if he calls at a bookſeller's, the boy turns his back; and what is the moſt fatal of all prognoſticks, authors will viſit him in a morning, and talk to him hour after hour of the malevolence of criticks, the neglect of merit, the bad taſte of the age, and the candour of poſterity.

All this, modified and varied by accident and cuſtom, would form very amuſing ſcenes of biography, and might recreate many a mind which is very little delighted with conſpiracies or battles, intrigues of a court, or debates of a parliament: to this might be added all the changes of the countenance of a patron, traced from the firſt glow which flattery raiſes in his cheek, through ardour of fondneſs, vehemence of promiſe, magnificence of praiſe, excuſe of delay, and lamentation of inability, to the laſt chill look of final diſmiſſion, when the one grows weary of ſolliciting, and the other of hearing ſollicitation.

Thus copious are the materials which have been hitherto ſuffered to lie neglected, while the repoſitories of every family that has produced a ſoldier or a miniſter are ranſacked, and libraries are crowded with uſeleſs folios of ſtate papers which will never be read, and which contribute nothing to valuable knowledge.

I hope the learned will be taught to know their own ſtrength and their value, and inſtead of devoting their lives to the honour of thoſe who ſeldom thank them for their labours, reſolve at laſt to do juſtice to themſelves.

NUMB. 103. SATURDAY, *April* 5, 1760.

Reſpicere ad longæ juſſit ſpatia ultimæ vitæ. JUV.

MUCH of the pain and pleaſure of mankind ariſes from the conjectures which every one makes of the thoughts of others; we all enjoy praiſe which we do not hear, and reſent contempt which we do not ſee. The *Idler* may therefore be forgiven, if he ſuffers his imagination to repreſent to him what his readers will ſay or think when they are informed that they have now his laſt paper in their hands.

Value is more frequently raiſed by ſcarcity than by uſe. That which lay neglected when it was common, riſes in eſtimation as its quantity becomes leſs. We ſeldom learn the true want of what we have till it is diſcovered that we can have no more.

This eſſay will, perhaps, be read with care even by thoſe who have not yet attended to any other; and he that finds this late attention recompenſed, will not forbear to wiſh that he had beſtowed it ſooner.

Though the *Idler* and his readers have contracted no cloſe friendſhip, they are perhaps both unwilling to part. There are few things not purely evil, of which we can ſay, without ſome emotion of uneaſineſs, *this is the laſt*. Thoſe who never could agree together, ſhed tears when mutual diſcontent has determined

termined them to final ſeparation; of a place which has been frequently viſited, though without pleaſure, the laſt look is taken with heavineſs of heart; and the *Idler*, with all his chillneſs of tranquillity, is not wholly unaffected by the thought that his laſt eſſay is now before him.

This ſecret horrour of the laſt is inſeparable from a thinking being, whoſe life is limited, and to whom death is dreadful. We always make a ſecret compariſon between a part and the whole; the termination of any period of life reminds us that life itſelf has likewiſe its termination; when we have done any thing for the laſt time, we involuntarily reflect that a part of the days allotted us is paſt, and that as more is paſt there is leſs remaining.

It is very happily and kindly provided, that in every life there are certain pauſes and interruptions, which force conſideration upon the careleſs, and ſerioufneſs upon the light; points of time where one courſe of action ends and another begins: and by viciſſitude of fortune, or alteration of employment, by change of place, or loſs of friendſhip, we are forced to ſay of ſomething, *this is the laſt.*

An even and unvaried tenour of life always hides from our apprehenſion the approach of its end. Succeſſion is not perceived but by variation; he that lives to-day as he lived yeſterday, and expects that as the preſent day is ſuch will be the morrow, eaſily conceives time as running in a circle and returning to itſelf. The uncertainty of our duration is impreſſed commonly by diſſimilitude of condition; it is only by finding life changeable that we are reminded of its ſhortneſs.

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This conviction, however forcible at every new impreſſion, is every moment fading from the mind; and partly by the inevitable incurſion of new images, and partly by voluntary excluſion of unwelcome thoughts, we are again expoſed to the univerſal fallacy; and we muſt do another thing for the laſt time, before we conſider that the time is nigh when we ſhall do no more.

As the laſt *Idler* is publiſhed in that ſolemn week which the Chriſtian world has always ſet apart for the examination of the conſcience, the review of life, the extinction of earthly deſires, and the renovation of holy purpoſes, I hope that my readers are already diſpoſed to view every incident with ſerioufneſs, and improve it by meditation; and that when they ſee this ſeries of trifles brought to a concluſion, they will conſider that, by outliving the *Idler*, they have paſſed weeks, months, and years, which are now no longer in their power; that an end muſt in time be put to every thing great as to every thing little; that to life muſt come its laſt hour, and to this ſyſtem of being its laſt day, the hour at which probation ceaſes, and repentance will be vain; the day in which every work of the hand, and imagination of the heart, ſhall be brought to judgment, and an everlaſting futurity ſhall be determined by the paſt.

END OF THE EIGHTH VOLUME.

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